THE UNCOMMON COMMONPLACE

WILLIAM A. QUAYLE

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The Uncommon Commonplace

BY
WILLIAM A. QUAYLE

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Printed in the United States of America

First Edition Printed September, 1921
Reprinted March, 1922

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I

THE UNCOMMON COMMONPLACE[1]

When shall we learn, past ever forgetting it, that the commonplace is uncommon? The common things must always be the chief delight of all such as have lived deeply. The shallows where ships cannot sail and wild waves cannot come ashore may have scant care for commonplaces, and call loudly for the unusual, but the deep places of the soul and deep souls are ever expectant for the invasion of the ordinary. The going far afield for pastures for the brain and heart is witless and is obsolescent. Let us rejoice out loud because of that. It was one of the strenuous achievements of Charles Dickens that he made romance a domestic matter. He did not foreignize the heart. He put it under every lowly roof. He did not take us into kings' palaces, where we would be intruders at the best, and endured though never wanted, but he put us in homely houses where we felt the eternal wonder of the hearts which God had made. It is not meant that Dickens discovered this. Of course not. All democracy was discovered to mankind by Christ. The cattle stall settled that, and the carpenter's bench settled that. Life has been content to king it in scant quarters since the epiphany of God. But Dickens made

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this democracy common talk. He was read as no novelist had been read. Not even Scott was everybody's novelist like Dickens. Scott thought too highly of gentle blood, so called. He was feverish when nobilities were near. He was disposed to drop a curtsy when the lords drove by not noting he was standing in the road. But Dickens knew the world had gone democratic. He knew the common man had come to stay, and that he was really the entrancing fiction-stuff. Goldsmith had found that secret when he wrote The Vicar of Wakefield. That preacher brother has had his way with a century and over, and has amassed a fortune of friends in all corners of this earth wherever kind hearts are esteemed more than coronets and gentle faith above Norman blood. The tearful story of the heart has not often been set down with such authentic immortality as when this vagabond son of a preacher found his tongue and pen babbling like a straying brook about the memories of his childhood and his heart.

Really, it is not less than phenomenal, to such as find vital interest in fiction as an interpreter of eras and atmospheres, to see how present-day fiction has eluded riches and palaces and has invaded huts and houses of less imposing sort and has sat down to smile on simple porches and by everyday folks. I confess that it thrills me like the voice of a violin set to grief. What fiction talks of is very likely to be what people

think of; for, when the last word is said, the novelists are of us and not apart from us, rather and decidedly a part of us. They feel as we feel. "The simple annals of the poor" was how Poet Gray characterized the everyday life of his time. I doubt you would find a poet in Anglo-Saxondom to-day to write so witless a phrase. We know better. I am not faulting Gray. I am praising the better eyesight of the century where God has given us our place of life. Life is, at its most ordinary estate, more fear-provoking and wonder-provoking than the advent and departure of a comet. Souls—any souls, all souls—hold us with their eyes. What the few are doing is never really important, but what the many are doing is the tragedy or the comedy of this world. The multitude, who dares to snub it? Why, the gray sea fitting its hands for shipwrecks, and its lips for blowing wild melodies—songs of death—and white faces floating like bubbles on the angry waves—that sea is not so fearsome a thing as a crowded street of a populous city. I was the other evening hanging around New York to see the huge hives of trade disgorge their multitudes. I stood and watched. I am a city man for many years, but profess never to see this drama without the wildest beating of the heart. When can I see a scene so molded in the hands of grim tragedy or smiled on and smiled into sunlight by laughing comedy as where the many are homeward bound? At morning, when they come to

toil, there is less current, less mass, more severalty; but at night the rush from the business houses is as the outrush of pent-up waters. Homeward bound, swift step, eager or uneager faces, but always the tramp of souls; the mighty march of the lives of women and of men who make and unmake governments, and sow empires that are to be, or fire the shots that rake the decks of the ships of the days we shall not see but the future shall feel and fear. The uncommon common man; the unusual usual; the tragic terror of the untragical everyday—have we caught that? Are we ever alert for the wondering eyes that grip our souls, and dry eyes that have stored up behind them whole Niagaras of tears, or common people who would at the touch of a cry of one they loved leap to heights high as the foot of Calvary's hill? Here where boils the volcano of populations, here genius may light its torch to higher flame than we have learned to read by. We are where the usual has come to the throne. What man can guess what lies in any other man? What genius can decipher the hieroglyphics of pain which are washed by the sunlight of smiles on many and many a face? We are not apt in such insight. These things are too high for us. We are born too late to forget the regality of the many. We are neck deep in essential and influential commonplace. The Angel of Lonesome Hill is scarcely a solitary instance. The occasion differed, but in many and many a

woman's heart lies the everlasting love which needs but to be provoked to do such sublime things as that woman of prayer and gentle yet mighty hope. "We are such stuff as dreams are made of"—with the emphasis upon the "we" —is the true saying of that Shakespeare who knew so much of the depths of the human soul. We are the dreams which need only to be put to phrase to make an immortal classic.

Not one step of the journey of life is uneventful. We are always confronted by the new and the alluring. It is like reading a play of Shakespeare —we are at every line stepping from somewhat to somewhat. We are never on drowsy ground. It is as reading all Sidney Lanier's poems. You pass from poem to poem, and each one is a hill top which sentinels a landscape. Sometimes the "Marshes of Glynn" are under the eye, sometimes the "Fields of Corn," sometimes the "garden where the Master waits," sometimes the "Crystal Christ," sometimes the "Caliban Sea," sometimes the farmer Jones. I sit and think them all over. I think over the poems of any noble poet—say, like Longfellow, and feel my way across his soul or across the spirit of an era; I cannot be weary. I am always at a fresh rivulet shining from the hills. We never dare (for our soul's sake) let any poetry pass by unread. I have found it so in many years of reading poetry in newspapers and magazines. Not but that many a rhyme will be useless for soul-stuff, but you

cannot tell. You might miss a revelation. It takes but a line to transfigure the world, and we must not miss that line. I set down here some poems I have clipped from passing pages in recent days; not wholly at random certainly, some of these being meet to be named great poems. To have missed any of these stanzas would have been an actual calamity. These poets had the sight of things not often seen, though they might have been often seen and by us all had we been watchers. We missed the vision, not because it paused not upon our hill to make us salutation, but because we were not watchers for the advent on the hill.

The Wind of Dreams

BY ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON

Wind of the Downs, from upland spaces blowing,
Salt with the fragrance of the southland sea,
Sweet with wild herbs in smoothest greensward growing,
You bring the harvest of my dreams to me.

Wraiths that the scented breath of summer raises,
Ghosts of dead hours and flowers that once were fair. . . .
Sorrel and nodding grass and white moon daisies. . . .
Glimmer and fade upon the fragrant air.

I hear the harvest-wagons homeward driven
Through dusky lanes by hedgerows dark with leaves. . . .
The low gold moon, hung in a sapphire heaven,
Looks on the wide fields and the gathered sheaves.

Wind of the Downs—from cloud-swept upland spaces,
Moorland and orchard-close and water-lea.
You bring the voices and the vanished faces—
Dreams of old dreams and days long lost to me.

Love

BY JOHN DRINKWATER

Lord of the host of deep desires
  That spare no sting, yet are to me
Sole echo of the silver choirs
  Whose dwelling is eternity.
With all save thee my soul is prest
  In high dispute from day to day,
But, Love, at thy most high behest
  I make no answer, and obey.

The Hills of Rest

BY ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

Beyond the last horizon's rim,
  Beyond adventure's farthest quest,
Somewhere they rise, serene and dim,
  The happy, happy Hills of Rest.

Upon their sunlit slopes uplift
  The castles we have built in Spain—
While fair amid the summer drift
  Our faded gardens flower again.

Sweet hours we did not live go by
  To soothing note on scented wing:
In golden-lettered volumes lie
  The songs we tried in vain to sing.

They are all there; the days of dream
  That build the inner lives of men;
The silent, sacred years we deem
  The might be, and the might have been.

Some evening when the sky is gold
  I'll follow day into the west;
Nor pause, nor heed, till I behold
  The happy, happy Hills of Rest.

Tears

BY LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE

When I consider Life and its few years—
A wisp of fog betwixt us and the sun;
A call to battle, and the battle done
Ere the last echo dies within our ears;
A rose choked in the grass; an hour of fears;
The gusts that past a darkening shore do beat;
The burst of music down an unlistening street—
I wonder at the idleness of tears.
Ye old, old dead, and ye of yesternight,
Chieftains and bards and keepers of the sheep,
By every cup of sorrow that you had,
Loose me from tears, and make me see aright
How each hath back what once he stayed to weep:
Homer his sight, David his little lad!

Sleep

BY PERCY MACKAYE

Frail Sleep, that blowest by fresh banks
Of quiet, crystal pools, beside whose brink
The varicolored dreams, like cattle, come to drink.

Cool Sleep, thy reeds, in solemn ranks,
That murmur peace to me by midnight's streams,
At dawn I pluck, and dayward pipe my flock of dreams.

The everyday of our own life, when we gather the scattered days into a flock and fold them for a night and look them over one by one—which could have been omitted and our life not have been bereft? "They were grimly commonplace," you say. "They were poor ditto marks, and their omission had left life without scar," some one tartly remarks. And are you very sure

of that, good friend? Is not each part of a gray cathedral a non-negligible portion? Can any stone be spared from the arch and not leave that arch fissured with loss? We are too greedy with our words affirmational of identity of days and doings. All the hill ministers to the climb to the summit. Every pebble was partner of the crest-climb. May it not be so with life? There is no defense of the slurs of life's every day. By them we came to be the what we are. They ministered to one ennobling event; for we cannot argue that the soul as the soul is come to, by what paths soever, is a weird, inspiring arrival, baffling, befogging, shaming, sometimes, still wider than the span of the blue sky. The paths which led to it are eventful ways.

Do we recall our childhood? The common ways, the schoolhouse where the whole world to us was at its widest; the fish streams, the swimming hole, the scramble up the banks, the dusty road where we with stone-bruised feet limped and still were glad, the spring where we loved to sprawl and drink, and drink and drink; the spankings wherewith our relatives regaled us with the remark that we never had one too many, the dark and its fears ("Night Fears," as Elia named them), the Sunday, the Monday, the Saturday for work and washing up (alas, the weekly washing up for boys!); the schooldays and the other days, the chores, the pailing of the cows, the plowing and the planting and the

cultivating of the corn, the first suggestions of spring, the when we stopped the plowing midfield to see the sullen splendor of a cloud burn low like a great ship in conflagration, the watering place for the horses, we sitting sidewise while they drank, feet to the fetlocks in the laving stream; the foddering the cattle in the winter when the bridle bits were frozen and our fingers were burned with the frost as with fire, the lonelinesses which came to childhood (so forcefully described by Henry van Dyke in "The Whippoorwill," a poem of enduring beauty)—these and a hundred thousand more we remember not, were making us. That was the thing we did not know and had no call to know, though we do know it now. These stupidities and humdrums were the hardy makers of our souls. They were like fathers and mothers, little given to melodrama, but of such deep and beautiful necessity as makes us ever to think of them with a sob. The eventful uneventful days are majestical, not mythical. They dig those wells of water on the desert stretches and turn a yellow sand-waste into eventful green.

At Round Lake the even was come. A westward hill thwarted my view of the sunset, so I set out down the railroad track to catch the pageant I surmised was there. I always watch the sunsets, for so many never watch them. With me there is therefore a touch of the vicarious in watching broken sunsets waste or drift along

the shadowing sky. Not but that I love them. Not but that I am always at the point where the uncle of the lad in Wilfred Cumbermede, George Macdonald's beautiful novel, leads when the twain watch the set of sun, "God, Willie; God." All sunsets wherever seen have that saying for my soul. But, as for that, what in all this wide world of beauty but says to me, child and man, "God, Willie; God"? God hath his exclamatories in the silent places of his world. So out I trudged, a visitant to another sunset, a pilgrim to an apocalypse. "God, Willie; God!" And there the sunset awaited me as if expectant of my arrival. "Sunsets are mainly alike," says some sagacious insagacity. My friend, thou errest, not knowing the truth. Sunsets are similar. In nature we never come closer than similarity. Identicals have no rest for their feet where God has had the doing of things. Men build houses which are identical, more the shame to such unimaginative builders. But God is different. God is Poet. So are the sunsets common, yet as new as the first evening which fell like dew upon the earth. On this sunset, bergs floated in the eastward sky, slowly, from some unseen, silent sea, and, shot through and through with baleful fire, they floated like glorious garnets along their skies. The west was islanded with clouds. Every cloud was glorified from beneath by the wistful, lingering splendor of the sun. They shone, some of them like a reef in

tropic seas, some of them mere islands, toy islands, dots only roomy enough to borrow glory from the departed sun. Some were like sea shells at float, some like ravelings from some garment of light, some like bits of wreckage shined on by a sudden light. But all wore a surprise of light. "The light that never was on land or sea" was in this sky. "The Woods that Bring the Sunset Near" (what an engaging poem that is which Richard Watson Gilder at his poet best wrote down for us) were close beside, but were not needed to bring the sunset near; for the sunset itself was near. I could have thrust my hand into its wistful glory.

One sunset, just one sunset from the thousands, yet an event for a lifetime memory. And every day has its sunset.

No, we must not snub the daily doing, the homely commonplace. "Give us this day our daily bread," prayed the "Divine Hungerer." The commonplace of bread, the daily recurrent need and daily recurrent supply, are to be prayed for, therefore are we disqualified to despise the lowly commonplace. The earth worms plow the fields and predigest the ground. We may not disparage them, therefore. The viewing the commonplace as strangely uncommonplace will redeem life from bitterness and finicality and drudgery, and lift each happy day into a day of Advent and each night into a Mount of Beatitudes.

II

TO BE

For human beings, to be is birth plus continuance. We were not: we are. A cradle waited for us; a cradle held us; a cradle holds us no more. We are en route. We came, no thanks to us nor consent of us; but we came; and, thanks to the kind God, we were welcomed. Kings are not so welcome as we witlings were. It was beautiful and is beautiful. The welcome? Whose welcome? Why, everybody's welcome. And they celebrate our birthdays—our mothers and fathers do. I have seen many mothers with their children on birthdays, all laughter and all rejoicing. Scant wonder that each child of us thinks of himself over highly. We are educated to this conceit of thinking our coming the waited-for event of this big world. On the pier to wait our coming ship everybody seems to stand waiting and waving hands of welcome, and practising half tearful, half tuneful lullabies; and all for us! All the world out to meet and greet us. All guns fire salutes and all the bells ring, and all we wee helplessnesses and uselessnesses did was to "cuddle doon" with a spacious self-complacency as to say, "I am here; be happy." How sweet, how passing sweet is this welcome waiting us, all joy just be-

cause we are come. God thought this out. Only he could. Birth joy is a commonplace, but such commonplace as makes angels sing. Those angels' night songs, all joy, on the birthnight of the Manger-Babe are in a happy way the joy songs of theirs over all babe births; we come, and Heaven is glad; we come, and earth is glad; we come, and mother is glad; we come, and father is glad—everybody glad because we are come! Happy day!

Such as make difficulty of man's immortality should abate their fears. That is not our intellectual difficulty. The perplexing matter with which we are ever familiar yet never familiar is man's mortality. We are here; that is the inexplicable fact. We are too glib in accounting for it, yet are we ever reticent in accounting for it. "We are here," says the repeater of platitudes, and, listening to his own voice, he thinks he has heard words. He has not: he has heard only sounds and they indeliberate and immelodious. To be sure, we were born. In what wise, however, does this explain anything? We who were not, are. Out of the void where mind was not nor heart, into a void where heart beats and breaks and loves. We who were wingless, into a space where, winged, we keep easy pace with rushing stars and palpitant dawns. Birth is as unfathomed as the sea about the frozen pole. We cannot deny birth, though to understand birth is not of us nor in us.

TO BE

Living forever is no tax on faith. Could we but think at all, living at all is the tax on faith and the humbler of conceit. Our way is to take *being* as a matter of course. Better so. It is to that we must come at the last. All the rainbow flush of Wordsworth's "Ode to Immortality" means how little we know about our advent when we try our profoundest to know the most about it. We are the race of the unknowing. Our brow is unwrinkled because unperplexed. When we think about it we get muddled. All the broad-browed Platos have wrinkled foreheads, and wrinkled with the attempt to think out what cannot be thought out. We are rowers in a boat was how Plato thought of this; but how came the boat and how came we to be in the boat? "We were," says Plato, "we had been dwellers in some sovereign un-noted star"; but not all the broad-browed Platos can know aught of it. Their guesses are as trivial as a withered leaf sport of the winds. We are not tall enough to look over the hills which rim our yesterdays. Birth is so common: birth is so uncommon. It is everybody's commonplace, but still stays the ever-abiding, stupendous, uncommonplace; and the pulses beat to tell the heart is unforgetful of its task.

"Had we not been born," is a voice shambling as the jar of billows breaking when we are fast asleep and we but half awakened by their clamor. And not to have been! Void, viewless, unaccosted

of pain, unreproached by blame, unsinewed for the toil, unaffrighted by any fight, unscorpioned of conscience, not beckoned by love nor amused at any jest nor lashed to any floating wreck. Not to have been! No cradle, no little garments made by gentle hands in love and prophecy of us, no mother eyes and hands and kisses, no father arms as strong as strength and gentle as a kiss—all missed! And to have been born, all these things had! Who knows about it? Who will ravel out this riddle? Who shall extricate us from this tangle where we find ourselves enmeshed? And all the answer life affords, and to now it is no answer at all, is, "We are here."

"To be"—we cannot hinder that. Hamlet was not deep enough into his theme or he had not monologized "To be or not to be." To not be could not have hindered the being. We are launched boats at float upon the sea. The "to be" is inexplicable with such as be and inexorable with such as be not. They could not be. We are launched boats. We live whether or not we love living. We live whether or not we curse life. We are here. That is our modicum, our moiety, our penury, our plenty, our minimum, our maximum. Our hands, though not held out to receive alms as beggars do, are receivers of alms—the alms of nights and days and stars and fields and seas that beckon with the ships, and food and shelter from the storm, and gaudy raiment for the streets and laughter and the tattered raiment for a grave—

they are all gifts and we have had beggar's alms. We are mendicants of birth and all that intervenes till death.

If the sea be and we be upon it, shall the sea's breadth be a hard saying? Is the blue boundlessness of ocean a more grievous saying than an inlet of sea? That it is the sea is the perplexing perplexity, not where it ends. To haggle over immortality is petty. That is not the crux. The crux is mortality. It devolves on those who deny the deathlessness of the soul to do the arguing. Why should life quit? It had no call to begin but plainly has begun. Though we be dullards, we know that. Why should we not last? Why should not a sun shine on forever? Why should not the soul go on and on forever? Who is there to extinguish it? The light is lit. What wind should blow it out?

"To be" is our vocation. To stay being, why is that a thought too winged? Who lit life's lamp may well keep it trimmed and burning. He hath not told us he would not. Rather into our dubitation comes the voice, "If it were not so, I would have told you."

Hearken to Browning's "Paracelsus" saying,

> "What's life to me?
> Where'er I look is fire, where'er I listen
> Music, and where I tend bliss evermore."

To be is to be always.

III

TO WORK

"Opera" is a sturdy Latin word, sweaty as Samson after carrying away Gaza's gates and walking with them to the windy hill. It has suffered a change in that now it shouts at us from the theater stage in the character of music and has the strain of muscle of Caruso as he climbs laboriously to the top perch of the musical scale. I liked the word before it became ladylike with the rustle of silk and fan and buzz of very small talk. "Opera," the Roman word, sweats like a dying slave, dying truly, but working to the last hot breath and last hot sweat drop, and with him, life and labor expire together though with no cold bead on the brow, rather a boiling drop of hot toil barely completed.

"The Works," we read and feel the sense that is on the world regarding the literary doings of our venerable masters of expression in words. The Works of Plato, the Works of Shakespeare, the Works of Samuel Johnson, but the works! What distinguished literary artists have accomplished is thus set down, not as the leisure and rest of those ruddy brains, but as their sweat and muscle-strain.

Life climbs to work. When we have come to

where it is worth while to be, toil bends its back to the burden. Great spirits eventuate in work. Is not this an entirely heartening consideration? Pity is not for us who work. We are built as the world is built—to take the load. The butterfly is not so valuable as the mule. What the mule lacks in beauty he makes up in pull. The ship on the swift seas is not for frolic, but for burden-bearing; and it is worth while to recall that no pleasure yacht is as lovely as a far-going ship laden with merchandise for the laborious wharves of the world.

Migrating birds going South do not sing. They take high flight toward long holiday. It is when the birds turn northward and on their throats is the gentle pressure of the northern air that they break forth into an irrepressible and inextinguishable melody. Northward they go, not to dally nor to sing, but to build nests and on unerring wing to find a place to rear a brood to make other summers have their song. It is when birds front labor that they sing. We front the load as the storm petrel the seas or the pines front the dawning to gladden with the luster of the day. Our worthwhileness is in our work. Not for leisuring, but for laboring, are we contrived with muscle strengthened by the lift and weakened by the monotony of doing nothing. Muscles are of no more worth than rotten twine until they are set to school to toil. "Jarge," in Jeffrey Farnol's The Broad Highway, is magnificent and majestic

because his arm is grown so like mobile steel by the swing of the hammer through days on days where weariness delayed because strength was increased. Life's mighty men of valor never were clothed in fine linen. They were clothed in scanty garments sopping wet with salt sweat squeezing from flesh which counted naught worth while but robustious laboriousness. You cannot contrive an "Iliad" with sitters-around for *dramatis personæ*. The "Anabasis" sweats blood. The Katabasis drips with sweat as it makes arduous descent to call "The sea, the sea!" and creates a battle hunger for the sea. The heathen gods sat idly on a summer hill. The Christ worked in a toiling land until he died at his lift to sphere the world out of the dark and into an amazing light.

Life turns its back on idleness and snubs it in the market place and on the street and in the halls of fame. The man who has never tasted sweat on his salt lips will have no statue built to him on any highway where mankind crowd to their day's work. "What are your *Opera?*" saith Earth with sleeves rolled up and garment open at the throat and hands gloved in goodly grime earned in the workshops of giant industries. Work-clothes constitute earth's elegant apparel. Modern painting and sculpture have deserted kings' houses and kings' battlefields and have found the world's workshops and working women and workingmen the fascinations of civilization. Potato-diggers in the potato rows at sunset in an

open field become a theme from which a modern poet in pigments has created a subtle glory for which riches have paid the price of a king's ransom. "They that will not work shall not eat" was a preacher's notion of the treatment to be accorded the hobo. Certain it is that the unworking shall not live in any to-morrow unless in some piece of invective of satire. History damns the doless. Nothing is more certain. Bees (those canny folks, who with unwritten constitution govern themselves) have a hard way of dealing with drones. They feed them, feast them, rear them as self-sufficing aristocrats, and on a day, with poignant justice, proceed to slay them all. "Who will not work shall not live long," say the bees. They are witful folk withal. In all our human story the closing chapters have found no record of the folks that did not do. The doless have had swift chariots and drums and outriders and silken curtains and gaudy apparel, but though they guessed it not, were driven in their fine equipages to their grave, and no one was there to bury them. They rotted in their chariots in the sun. Life is a drastic medicine. It tastes like liquid fire. In the long run no favors are given. Men get what men earn. Some seem to be born to sip nectar like a butterfly, but they are ephemeral and vanish like a drop of dew upon a sunburned leaf. They leave no memorial. If a grave stone be set for them, no one reads the epitaph or pauses at the grave. Yet through centuries men

have pilgrimmed to the graves of such as did things. The doers of mankind have everlasting memorials. No tablet of brass whereto Horatius Flaccus makes such reiterant reference is needful to keep their memories green. Nor need there be any wistful prayers as of Tiny Tim—"Lord, keep their memory green"—for God will see to that. Men go and will go to Devonshire to stand above the Devonshire country grave of sweet Robin Herrick. His work was singing songs that sing themselves. We go and will go while earth shall stay, to see the quiet house where George Washington sleeps quietly above a sturdy river swimming to the sea. His work is a Republic dedicated to immortality. Men go and visit a birth-house in Canada—because from that cradle went one whose work was to put the earth in speaking connection with itself—Bell was born there. Men journey little to the graves of kings. I have not seen men of sound mind that traveled to Windsor Castle to see the royal mausoleum there, but have known an exceeding great multitude go to City Road Chapel to behold where John Wesley, that man of vasty labors, sleeps. Time has an antipathy toward the doless folks. It is a bitter drink: and they in their time were merry folk. The beaux and belles pass away like a passing show and the toiling folks who farmed the field and built the homes where children cry and sing and play and who work for the betterment of the world, the world, the bettered world, is

their memorial. Ye shadowy ghosts in hell, who weirdly cry wild cries of wild despair, who are ye? Answer, "We be they that never toiled. Ghosts were we: ghosts are we. No substance had we: no substance are we," Wail on, wail, and pass! Labor, to an inattentive gaze, seems unsmiling and penniless. It walks a sullen road. Ditch-diggers have rheumatism. However, gaudy citizens of luxury have gout. Better rheumatism than gout. And, beside, the rheumatism gotten by digging ditches through a field to make it fertile for gentle harvests is honorably come by. But disease left as the poisonous residuum of luxury's ease and years-long debauchery is a blot in the 'scutcheon. Toil dares to have its biography writ. Vagrancy and sloth and indisposition to bear one's share of the human load, cannot face the dreary page on which its dubious memorials are set down.

William J. Locke's vagabond, in The Beloved Vagabond, is beloved because through gentleness of purpose and generosity of character and spirit of human brotherhood, he came out of vagabondage to the dear house where labor wearied the day and led it gladly to the night and where a woman and a babe took all the cark from care and weariness from toil. And Locke was the same author beautiful with "Septimus" possessing the minstrelsy of a brave spirit who forgot about himself being so sweetly busy remembering others. Such men dwell in the sunrise.

Ulysses (Tennyson's Ulysses) says of his son, "He works his work, I mine." Bravely said, grave Ulysses! Thy work is written all in the "Odyssey." The sea and thou, thou and the sea, and so art thou sure immortal. Lowell and Longfellow and Charles Lamb and Robbie Burns complain, betimes, at their routine. Yet did each, while at his bench of toil, achieve his immortality. But for the farming, Burns had written neither "The Mouse" nor "The Daisy," nor had his voice rung gladly across the sunrise land like a cuckoo's call. We are not oppressed by labor: we are expressed by labor. The thing we are, no man knows until we work it out. It was the voyage disclosed Columbus was the discoverer and made him the admiral of the seas. It was the campaign that set Grant into deathless fame. We do well not to mutter at our work, but sing at it. So the sweet mothers of the world do, and the brave fathers.

Etching is slow work, but is work worth while, for so the cathedrals stay when they are battered to debris and dust. Wood engraving is slow work, yet so Thomas Bewick is here though dead and dust; and a cult gathers about him. Those engravers on steel who, wooed by great Turner to take his "Rivers of France" and his "Harbors of England," replied and bade them "bide awee"—"allwee" until to some of us, those engraved Turners are gentle as a horizon of restfulness seen in the gloaming.

We toil and are bruised by it, but in turn are made by it and make by it. Our sweat gives us affluence and influence and sets us in heavenly places of human regard. "He worked for men"—what think you, soul, of such an epitaph to give thee honorable immortality? An oar found floating from a Norse boat ages since had engraved upon it this line, "Oft was I weary when I tugged at thee." But yet is there the suggestion of it all, and all poetry. The oar is poetry; the boat is poetry; the ocean is poetry; the voyage is poetry; the cargo, wife and child, and oarsmen, poetry. And now the floating oar which has the story of a brave and toilful life, is a poem no winds can blow away and no seas can float to oblivion. It is engraven on the recollection of the heart.

I should be glad of heart and life to help labor know its own significance. Work is no grievance and no grief, nor is it a dullard sluggard's story. It is a chime of bells that swing and hearten all who hear. It is a laughter in the skies, a flight among the clouds, a rapture in the sun. When we recollect all we have done, how sweet the perusal! We were not parasites. We were not mistletoe but oaks, not blowing thistledown but strong-winged seraphs. Better a little life spent prudently and gently and gladly in making other people at home and in bringing to the hungry food, and to the houseless shelter, and to the thirsty a cup of water in the name of the Well of Living

Water than to have been cradled in a golden cradle to be put upon a golden throne we did not earn and could not fill.

Certainly life is a very self-respecting thing if so be it devotes itself to toil. The being able to look a body's self in the face when he passes the looking-glass is quite well worth working for; and it has to be worked for. We have pretty well passed the low ideal that work is degrading, yet have not quite reached the ideal that work is very ennobling. We may still detect a semi-atrophied organ of the prig in our make-up in that we rather think it finer to have some one black our shoes than for us to black some one's shoes, or to be barbered by somebody than to have been somebody's barber. We should eliminate this littleness. We should exorcise that devil—for devil it is. Labor is honorable and glorious. By our work we earn not alone our own self-respect—a thing highly to be desired—but the respect of others and their applausive gratitude. "You did this thing for us" is the high word earth has to utter to any of her daughters and her sons. To have earned a wage in the world, to have done something worth while, to have worked our passage across the sea of life whether by trimming sails or keeping the watch or stoking the furnace or washing the decks—is all one. The ship which bears humanity as a cargo must be kept clean and bright and seaworthy. Only idiots and insane sail for nothing. Babes earn their way by their

smiles at their mothers and their little fingers grasping their fathers' finger.

Men walk. It is better to walk across a continent than to ride on the trucks. It is better to go hungry than to steal the grapes. It is better to earn a crust than to possess superfluity every day and be a pauper. That lovely company of the world's millions of those who work constitute the most exhilarating scene this earth affords, so it seems and always has seemed to me. To work for wife or child or father and mother, for sick or needy neighbor, is as good as being in heaven. I should say better than being in heaven, but heaven is an unexpressed glory, so must be spoke of in terms of awe and reticence. To work singing as the stream does—turning the wheel, as the auto engine does when it settles itself to business of the running of the car, as car wheels do as we hear them in the night, as the burrs do in the great mills which grind flour for a continent—that is life.

"What wrought you?" and the rose replied, "Flower and fragrance." "What wrought you?" and the wheat replied, "Golden field and bread for the world's tables." "What wrought you?" and the sea wind said, "I drive the ships." "What wrought you?" and the mountain replied, "Thunder and rivers and the forest pines and the far-fields blessed with drift of rain." "What wrought you?" and the ground answers, "I grow the crops that defeat hunger and nurture strength." "What

hast thou wrought, O Christ?" He smiles and answers, "Quiet upon the windy seas and forgiveness for the wrecked heart, and redemption for a world of shamed and broken men, and peace for such as greatly need so that none need despair." And I would have my answer. I want to be able to give my reply in terms of serenity and life lest I be put to shame amongst the brawny universe of brawny souls.

To work, not by compulsion, but by gleeful choice and high morals and to be sorry because the day grows late, verging toward sunset when rest must be near, though we be weary, but the work so invites us that we fain would hold the sun back from setting for a few hours more that we might proceed a little further with the goodly task with which the kind God had honored us, how should that fail of being the strange and dreamful thing, part human, part divine, which God's voice names "The Life Indeed"?

IV

TO LOVE

Flowers presuppose the ground. They are not creatures of the soil, but cannot live apart from it. They root in the earth though they do not bloom in it. They cannot invert this process. They never root in the sky. Some bit of ground must they possess for footing. Frozen it may be as the where the Alpine flora grows, but it is ground.

To live is the ground of life. There all we are to be roots itself. By and by we shall change the place of rooting but never the fact of rooting. To live is to give all things regarding souls a chance. A cradle is the introduction to soldier, farmer, mariner, poet, orator, architect, dreamer of every purpureal dream which kindles black skies into a heavenly splendor. Life is our solid footing for every climb souls are to make, even as the ground is the point from which all mountains begin their leap into the astonishing azure.

We live to love. Without loving, life were not worth living. This is the very last word life has to utter for our edification. To live loveless were worse than to die and worse than not to have been born. The dumb foxglove has all the aspect of a flower, but never becomes the flower it tuned itself to be. It never blooms and is therefore the pathos among flowers. The mercy of flowers of

almost every hue and fashioning is that they bloom in such wild multitudes as to bewilder our thought and to swing even low minds into lofty comment. The wild profusion of blossoms is one of the reckless miracles which the Chief Gardener is ever flashing before our bewildered eyes. And then not to bloom! To be a dumb foxglove and when the attempt is made, not to stammer into the expression of its heart! To stay dumb when one opening of the lips would eventuate in music. Alas, can we name a bitterer disappointment which roots in the heart?

Not to love is the dumb foxglove of life. We are here, and here for love. Love ushered us into this wide sky, dawnlit and glad. It was the love of God. Love met us here with kisses and with songs, seeing we had a mother and a father. By love are we beckoned to walk, to speak, to try to do our best. We are led on by love and followed by love. All our schoolmastering has no other intent. For love were we born and to love do we make our journey. A cathedral is built for prayer and choiring of deep-throated bells and through the shadowing dusk the spires crowd up to watch through darkness for the dawn and to bid eyes which follow the leap of spire to fasten them on the face of God. We say of the cathedral it was built for God and man, to certify that man is meant for God and God hath died for man. The cruciform of the cathedral bears joyous attestation to the mode God died and the spire is the

divine finger pointing men up where they are to live the wasteless life with the glad God.

Thus is life meant for love. All its dreams, its anguishes, its fierce unrests, its far-going quests, its watchings for the dawn and then its watchings for the dark are wisps of cloud drifting along its upper sky showing which way the heavenly trade winds blow.

To love! We are not spacious enough for ourselves. We are fettered in narrow quarters till love comes our way and shows us into spaces where the breadth and height we are may have their chance. They need space. Nothing is stranger in this world than this haunting sense of the insufficiency of one soul for itself. We should have thought that a soul had might to make its way alone like a lone traveler. What should a great life need of helpers? Can it not stand alone like solitary pines on solitary crests? We should have thought so. All we dare say on that head is that our supposition was only one other token of our ignorance. Aloneness is our death. The stars are gathered in shining companies. The flowers do group and swirl like wafting fires. The mountains seldom keep sentry alone. People are born villagers and can scarce be kept in a sequestered vale. We must see out or climb out or fare forth. "Outward bound" is written in our blood. We are lonesome till another comes. The very molecules of our human composition are clamorous for company.

This is a weird cogitation. No ghost tale is companion to it. Poe's Tales, fearsome as they are, are not so weird. "The City of the Sea," "Ulalume" are not so strange as "Annabel Lee," whose utmost dream "Was to love and be loved by me." Why should a soul be slave to an immortal hunger? Why may not a spacious life be in itself at home, and breathe freely, being alone? Would not that be a larger charter and a worthier procedure? Can Shakespeare not dwell in himself? Does that vast immortality need company? Will not the drowsy night and jocund day "that stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops," and the stars "that in their motions like an angel, sing still choiring to the young-eyed cherubim"—will not these suffice this man of sunups and noons? His sonnets make reply. Whatever their intent, their hunger is incredible. Not more do blue seas cling to the shore than this solar splendor of mind clings to some other than himself. His loneliness is on him as on Enoch Arden in his tropic splendor, breaking his heart in loneliness of love.

The love sonnets of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, of Coventry Patmore, of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, are starlit with this surge of soul toward soul. We cannot stay within the confines of our little life. Not to "some far off divine event" is it solely to which "the whole creation moves," but to some far off divine Person. Soul clamors for soul. As the flower to the sun, so soul blossoms for soul.

Mrs. Browning's love sonnets I conceive to be

the highest point to which woman's soul has climbed in utterance. Women's souls have always been climbing in action. Deed is higher than word. Howbeit, word is high when it is the answer for the deed. Poetry of action will aspire to poetry of speech.

"Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
Unlike our uses and our destinies,
Our ministering two angels look surprise
On one another, as they strike athwart
Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee, art
A guest for queens to social pageantries,
With gages from a hundred brighter eyes
Than tears even can make mine, to ply thy part
Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do
With looking from the lattice-lights at me,
A poor, tired, wandering singer? . . . singing through
The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
The chrism is on thine head—on mine, the dew—
And Death must dig the level where these agree.

"Thou hast thy calling to some palace floor,
Most gracious singer of high poems! where
The dancers will break footing from the care
Of watching up thy pregnant lips for more,
And dost thou lift this house's latch too poor
For hand of thine? and canst thou think and bear
To let thy music drop here unaware
In folds of golden fullness at my door?
Look up and see the casement broken in,
The bats and owlets builders in the roof!
My cricket chirps against thy mandolin.
Hush! call no echo up in further proof
Of desolation! there's a voice within
That weeps . . . as thou must sing . . . alone, aloof.

"I lift my heavy heart up solemnly,
As once Electra her sepulchral urn,
And, looking in thine eyes, I overturn
The ashes at thy feet. Behold and see
What a great heap of grief lay hid in me,
And how the red wild sparkles dimly burn
Through the ashen grayness. If thy foot in scorn
Could tread them out to darkness utterly,
It might be well perhaps. But if instead
Thou wait beside me for the wind to blow
The gray dust up, . . . those laurels on thine head
O my beloved, will not shield thee so,
That none of all the fires shall scorch and shred
The hair beneath. Stand farther off then! Go.

"Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore
Alone upon the threshold of my door
Of individual life, I shall command
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
Serenely in the sunshine as before,
Without the sense of that which I forbore, . . .
Thy touch upon the palm. The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine
With pulses that beat double. What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue
God for myself, he hears that name of thine,
And sees within my eyes, the tears of two."

The story of how "The Sonnets from the Portuguese" came to be called by that name reads like a tender story out of some classic fiction. This is the story: After the marriage of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett, one day she came coyly to her husband and with scant

words slipped into his hand a bundle of manuscript and ran away like a girl. Then the poet sat down and with radiant rapture read for the first time the love sonnets written by Elizabeth Barrett for her beloved Robert Browning. And, poet that he was, he saw on the instant that he had read literature which should not die, and when he hunted for his wife and found her and told her his joy in the poetry, and his wonder in it, he insisted that the sonnets should be called "Sonnets from the Portuguese" because of her love poem on "Catarina to Camoens." Thus after long silence below a whisper, these beauteous blossoms of a woman's heart (more woman wise than most women are), were put into the hands of him who created the love.

When soul thus makes wild, fearless, yet ever fearful way to soul, we may well grow wild-eyed with a wonder touched with fear. The flight of wild birds toward a clime unknown is not so strange as this flight of soul toward a soul unknown. Restless till love comes, dying when love goes—that is love's age-long story as may be read in the post-battle scene in Tennyson's vivid drama of "Harold."

It is not enough to be. It is not enough to work. To live and to work are sky-born when they are both rooted in love. No earth occurrence can afford the charm of the spectacle of any girl loving any man and going with him anywhere and calling nothing lost, though all is

lost, in the rapturous finding of the beloved. We heed not such majesties, because they are familiar. We discredit our faculties when sights like these move us not to tears and wonder as a dayspring does not. All those poetries of our whole life sacred as a woman leaning about her baby's cradle, are squeezed from the cluster of our human loves. Men do bravely. The deed stirs us like battle shouts, though it were worth while in such cases to gravely weigh how such deeds of the work hands of our souls spring from the love of the heart. We love and therefore do.

Heroisms are always followers of love. A man risks his life and loses it for his wife and child. He sprang forth hero at the behest of love. So Dante sprang forth poet. The goaded, glorious heart, the longing heart, the heart outward bound!

To love—and then we know what to live was for. Life is a ship and love the passenger. On a seething summer day when the muggy sunshine made the flesh sticky with sweat, a woman with gentle though weary smile and brave eyes that tried not to weep but did weep, and voice taught gentleness by weeping—sat in a car and told me how her husband lay asleep under sunny skies where she had carried him to make one more fight for life, and as he lay panting for the few breaths he was to draw, he insisted with her that she had had no wedding ring worth while when they were married, but now he must have a ring with a brilliant in it to put upon her finger with

his own thin, wasted fingers before he hasted out whither he knew he must quickly go. She tried to dissuade him, and to persuade him that she did not need it, that she had never missed it, never longed for it, that having him was enough, that their love had seemed to her to know no lack. But he wistfully said, "No, before I die I must put a jewel on your wedding finger." So he sent to a jeweler for rings and chose the one he wished her to wear and saying over again the marriage holy phrase, "With this ring I thee wed," placed it pantingly on her finger and smiled and kissed her tear-wet lips and passed out into the Blessed Land. And as the woman in her subdued voice soaked with tears told me the story, she pulled her glove from her sweaty fingers slowly, slowly, and disclosed the ring saying, meantime, "I see many lovers and many women glad in their beloveds, but I see no lover ever like my lover, and I turn away sorry for all the women who had not my beloved."

I had read Tennyson and Chaucer and Spenser and Herrick and the madrigals from Shakespeare and all the Elizabethan dramatists, but not anywhere had I read poetry exquisite as this—and the woman knew not it was poetry at all. That woman knew why life was made. She will not vex her brain on any speculative casuistry on life. She knows life's garden was given to grow love's holy flower.

A man's daughter died and he became old in a

night! Another man's son died, and in a few weeks, with no disease, he died. He was slain by his desolated heart. "Nothing counts," mumbled a foreign-speaking stolid-faced woman, weeping in a railroad station on a windy plain, "nothing counts but your man." A fine-spirited, great heart of a man said to me: "I have no home now. She is gone." Love is the original poet. Love is the world's poet laureate.

How all our living is bound together from life end to life end by our loves! Our mother's love, our father's love, which when we first awoke to any knowledge at all, were our possession. Love cradled us, hearts held us close, dear lips kissed us for fun—all for love. And through the years (when we knew not what love was worth or that it was of worth) love prayed for us, planned for us, dreamed for us, had its ache for us lest our leaf of laughter should be torn from our book of life or one petal be blown from our rose of joy. Love, all love, and we guessed it not, or, if guessing it, guessed it dimly.

Love cuts deep like a heavy sword, but the wound is a possession. A happy father and mother sent out as the birthday notice of their daughter, "She is more precious than rubies." Little daughter, what wild welcome you have in that home, and you will not know of it until at your own heart you hold a daughter and sing over her for utter inexhaustible joy, "You are more precious than rubies." A grave is better than a

grim heart whose sod is not cut by any spade or crooned over by a breaking heart. Love costs, but is worth more than it ever costs. "I have lost my child," the sobbing woman said, when she would have taken the plate from the table where the daughter who should not soon return used to sit and smile and say gay words and wise. And the woman's husband said: "Dear heart, leave the plate be. It shall always stay there, ever to be ready when she comes."

Life is a wild, wide water whereon to sail from sky to sky. From east rim to west rim, from gawdy morning to somber night, love's voice sings like a sea wind that hath all summer in its heart. Said an old poem read long since,

> "Love maketh life and life's great work complete,
> Some time will come the setting of the sun,
> And this brief day of the long work be done.
> There will be folded hands, lips without breath;
> But we shall have passed so—Love knows no death!"

Love makes all life worth while. The solemn and tender voice of the benediction is, "The love of God." Who weighs that blessed utterance, or can? If this universe of souls be shined across and through by love, it comes of God. We have caught love from God as we have caught life from God. The love of God is the one sure anchor which never breaks however hard the waves' mighty beat. The love of God abides and the universe has caught love from him. Scant wonder is it that love is passing wonderful. To live is to

love, and to love may be to die. The mother sheep catches the moor storm on her side and makes a covert for the wee bit lambie. The mother bird grows brave as a soldier when danger threatens her young. All living things love after some meager manner or master manner. Dogs die on the graves where their masters lie dead. This love of God has filtered like crystal waters through the whole soil of life and springs up in many an unthought-of spot as a happy fountain shining in the sun.

A blind preacher-poet, George Matheson, when his own heart was lovelorn, yet leaned hard upon the heart of God, whence streams the everlasting love, sang

> "O Love that wilt not let me go,
> I rest my weary soul in thee;
> I give thee back the life I owe,
> That in thine ocean depths its flow
> May richer, fuller be."

And another preacher-poet, Charles Wesley, in that very great poem entitled, "Wrestling Jacob," shouts like a chorus of angels:

> "'Tis Love! 'tis Love! thou diedst for me!
> I hear thy whisper in my heart;
> The morning breaks, the shadows flee;
> Pure, universal love thou art;
> To me, to all, thy mercies move;
> Thy nature and thy name is Love."

I know a picture which has walked into the very backlands of my soul. It is a picture of the cross

with the thorn crown on it and the anguish that shed blood. It is the cross of God. Before it an angel with strong, gentle face, and garmented in glistering white and wings hanging idle as if forgot, with left hand touching at the cross and eyes blinded by the love and loss unspeakable, the right hand flung in tragic terror across the blinded eyes. The love unspeakable blinded the angel like a freshet of suns.

Once a man I knew, whose mother and whose only daughter had gone from him and had outsped him into light, as he sat holding the quiet hand of his dying father who could no longer speak, but could intelligently hear and understand, said, "Father, when you get home, give my love to mother. You understand, father?" And the dying father, who could not speak, said "Yes" with his eyes. Continued my friend, "Father, kiss Olive"—his dead daughter—"for me when you see her." And the dying father smiled and nodded assent with his eyes. The son leaned and kissed him on the lips and his father went safely out to do his errand.

V

THE MOOD OF DEVOTION

"In everything give thanks."

Query: Have we not set the song of the Christian life too much to the tune of difficulty, danger, and sorrow? "In everything give thanks," I am pretty certain, will, in the multitude of instances, be translated as meaning that whatever difficulty or distress enters your life, be of grateful mood. Do not murmur. Be glad whatever roughness the waters wear as we voyage across their uncertain billows.

I am certain of two things in this matter. First, that this is how this Scripture is pretty generally viewed, and, second, that this is not what it does actually mean. It does mean that, but it means indefinitely more. A farm is on a landscape, but a farm is not the landscape; and he who confounds farm and landscape is not seeing things as they are. Difficulties are to be encountered and sorrows are to be met, and they are to be met with the mood of manly and womanly resignation to the larger issues of life, which is always resignation to the wide-working will of God. But that we are to be grateful for the clouds rather than the sunrise and the noon and the blessed open sky is to me absurd and a listless interpretation

of the good God our heavenly Father. To be glad on a holiday is as devout as to be sad on a funeral day. We shall need to reset our estimates of God and his will concerning us before we are in harmony with his mood. He is the glad God of the out-of-doors and the happy singing things whether they be birds or children or women or strong men. This anæmic notion of religion is unwholesome because it is untrue. God gives it no assent.

A good man and great said this: "In everything give thanks." Nobody but a good and great man could have said it. The sentiment is like Mount Lycabettus, from whose top all of historied Greece lies under the eyes without straining an eyeball. All life lies at the base of a mount of vision and of praise like this: "In everything give thanks." The fact which is meant to be lifted into light at this moment is that there is a devotional element in all things whatsoever. We say grace before meals, except we be heathen. We should say grace before labors and battles without or within and reading of books and taking of journeys and husking corn or going to picnics or a stroll through sunburnt fields for the sheer love of the crisp grass under foot and the hot sky overhead. Blessings lie about us thick as blades of grass along a Kansas hill.

We do narrow beyond the permission of God this thought of devotion if we must be at church or prayer meeting or at family prayer to be de-

votional. Those places and occupations are greatly good, but they do not monopolize the moods of devotion. The devotional frame is the deep consideration. Are we open to devotion for all things as Paul was? Saint Francis was not the last man who was devoutly grateful for the birds nor who counted them his brothers. It is meet to give thanks for the bird voices, and a good way to give such thanks is by listening to the voices.

That is worth weighing. To love things enough to give things heed is a mood of gratitude, whereas not to care enough for things to notice them is a first-class specimen of ingratitude toward God and his doings. The cricket's chir is a species of poetry which may well set the heart singing after its fashion too. Such a little warmth makes the cricket set his heart to song. Were we as good at the voicing of our gratitude as the cricket of the hearth, what a shout of chorusing would the great God hear from men!

The religious nature is wiser and wider than many religious folk are given to supposing. Christianity is generosity. "Thank God!" How often have I found my own given to that gust of gratitude—"Thank God!" And I am not slow to believe God hears such prayer and smiles with gladness to hear it. Why should we not give thanks for the finding of a wild flower, or the striking gracefulness of a child at play, or the toss of apple branches lit with bloom, or the blue jay's note with its musical unmusicality, or the flight

of a hawk along ranges of the sky, or the baffling motion of a prairie hawk with its vagrancy alluring as the pursuit of shadows cast by a wild wind-cloud?

Must a body's prayers be said only in the neighborhood of the Bible book and the preacher and the prophet's words? I resent the suggestion. It is not wide like God, and it is not kindly like the Christ who said thanks over a wild flower on a windy plain. God is bigger than we know, and Christianity is as big as God. I will venture that Paul, when he had his cloak and books and parchments back, said his prayers, not more over the cloak which he, a forgetful brother with no wife, had forgotten at somebody's house, which was so necessary to house his shivering body in his prison. He said, "Bless God for books." Did he say that? Depend on it he did. Else what does he mean in saying, "In everything give thanks"? If he advises gratitude and grateful prayer in calamities, how much more would he have expended thanks on all such things as gird life and enlarge it and extend its paths out to all skies which hold their beckoning lights to beckon thoughts and desires outward bound?

No, secularities are just theme for praise and prayer. We have no call to ask for things for which we have not call to answer to God in spontaneous words of thanks. "I thank you" is a phrase which the debonair use frequently. Courtesy is a good habit for a body's own sake. To be

genteel is a soul-instinct of fineness, and if a man or a woman lived alone and brake bread with himself (although such way of living is not necessary nor to be desired; if one is alone and has no relatives, then should such a one borrow some child, or, better, some old homeless body, somebody human, not feline nor canine, to keep alive the humanness in one's own soul), he would do well to say, "I thank you" when he passes food to himself, for so would the method of good manners be kept alive and the social impulse would be hearkened to.

And if the giving thanks to people for all trivial services be the easy test of the gentleman or the gentlewoman, much more shall the giving thanks to God for all sorts of benefits be good manners toward God. How shall the ungrateful toward God think themselves genteel?

On a radiant day in August, when the windings of a quiet river are lit goldenly with the tawny green of swamp grasses which answer to all winds with weary reluctance, and the pines are black, blinding black in the light, and the upland meadows lean landward and lakeward and clasp hands with the yellow dunes of shifting sand, and across it past the lift of the dune-top is the sweet surprise of the blue waters of the lake, shoreless on the horizon, and the killdeer calls wailingly and the swallow dips with grace unphrasable to the surface of the stream where my boat floats, and life is very wonderful and God is very nigh—why is not this a

good place for devotion? Why should some dull-souled sectary with dull prudery of religion think that reading a page from Scripture is more godly than reading this illumined page from the Scripture of the living God who has writ in sunlight and laughter and the flight of birds as certainly as he has written in the Holy Book?

All things beckon good spirits toward God. I thank the Lord for the frozen wintry shore, and the summer pools where the rushes grow, and the way lazying uphill through the dust, and the listless cattle in the shade, and the hurrying of little chicks to the warning of the mother hen whose danger-call sends them all scudding to the haven of her sheltering care, and the sound of the winds through the grasses, and the happy face of the child, and a mother's look on her children, and a man at the plow or trowel, and a child running to meet the father coming home at dusk and getting an early kiss, and an old mother coming on a train from afar to meet her son whom she has not seen for long, so long, or a gravestone with the blessed inscription, "Asleep in Jesus," or a girl reading a letter from her lover, or somebody reading a novel of purity and beauty like Crockett's A Lilac Sunbonnet. Why not be devout over these?

Are we to think it is more pious to pray on the cold flags of a dark cathedral than on the sunny floor of God's cathedral of the sky? Really, which is more accepted will not make long parley in the

heart which devoutly loves God, the God of every lovely and every living thing, or such as watch the out-of-door Christ in his goings through the meadow lands and across the winding hills or by the sea where the fisher boats gather at the gray of every morning, or through the wheat fields in the ripening grain. Where he was at home and at prayer we may safely be at prayer and at home.

"Father, I thank thee," says the Christ; and "In everything give thanks," says his brainiest follower. And for one I will take this advice and will find provision for devotion in everything—books, folks, church, labor, song, tears, and cares. And for the least and the largest to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ will make my adoration for the Christ, my Saviour and my King.

VI

THE DEAD MASTERS OF LIFE

How mysterious and moving a fact it is that the chief masters of life are the dead! Death blows its wind in the face of life to make life more vital. The mighty living hands are dead hands. From beyond the grave come those voices whose mystic music lifts the tune for the living world.

To an extemporaneous opinion, it appears that life must be ministered to by life, and by life only. The schoolmasters must be flesh and blood, color and speech, visible and obtruding and journeying along the busy thoroughfares where life makes laughing way among the multitudes. That is how things plainly seem at the first intake of the breath of thought. How else? Who could be our rowers at the oars of the boat of life save living hands of sinewy fingers and gripping palms? We must see, hear, feel the hot breath of our preceptors in the majestic episode called life.

We cannot extemporize on the main matters of the soul. We are bound to go to school to learn how things are. *A priori* has been taught modesty in part; and *a posteriori* is yet to be taught modesty. Experience must not be so loud in its table talk as to drown out the voices of dreaming. That is true. As is usual, truth lies somewhere be-

tween. Even poets must shake hands frequently with life before they can stammer out the drama of living. You cannot wholly prophesy life nor can you wholly experience life. The vastness of the thing is its impediment. How entirely reasonable that those landscapes which shall impress us and compel us must be those whose skies bend very blue above us and those whose fields lie very green around us and whose waters fling back cloud for cloud of the high bending heavens. This self-evident consideration is battered to pieces like a German offensive by things as we find them. The River Duddon over which Wordsworth has expended such a wealth of sonnet sequence cannot compare with Shakespeare's Forest of Arden. The River Duddon fades from the landscape of hill and stream while the Forest of Arden blows playful shadows across our faces and our hearts undyingly. Things we never saw are more visible than the things we always saw.

By an unanswerable logic we shall be led by hands warm at the palm and palpitant. And when we come to take the path and wind across the lea to neighboring wolds we find our fingers gripped by hands dust so long ago the marble monuments must be invoked to tell when they dwelt under the azure sky and felt the passing of the wind and viewed the wide-eyed daisies looking wonderingly at the sun. By the appeal to life, our chief masters are the dead. And if any should shudder at this as if the thought were

uncanny, let that one pause and recall how the father long since passed into the spacious silence named eternity is not less present to the heart than when in the fields or along the streets he worked to earn his family a livelihood. That sweet mother who sang about the house at work in other days sings now a sweeter song about the heart though she has years ago invaded the territory of eternity. This is no uncanny consideration. Rather it is a consideration which links life and death in a beautiful fraternity which may well be called immortality. The dead are still kinsmen of the living. No alabaster bowl of precious ointment is broken when death saunters past. With his rude clutch he did but let the precious fragrance out to sweeten all the air. What is history save the land of the dead? It is the Land of Things That Were. And when we need to walk in the To-day of things we scan the Yesterdays of things. Perforce 'tis so. We do not read history grimly: we read it intrancedly. It is that place where voices which ought not to be silenced remain unsubdued; where the rasp and squeak are taken from the chariot and all we perceive is the chariot racing toward its goal. The things that stay are the things that count. Action is perpetually vital. I was the other day reading a volume of Bancroft's History of the United States, selecting a volume at random, not as reading the series as I had done before, not beginning at a beginning and passing wisely

through to a conclusion, but picking a volume up to drink from as from a sudden wayside spring. And familiar as I am with that really noble historian, the thrill upon me by rushing into the thick of things (the Revolutionary War) where we were busy telling England to stay away from our shores and vex us no more with its peremptory policy, was so like fire running its naked fingers over my naked body in these days when England and France and America are grinding bloody shoulder against bloody shoulder for the rescue of the world from infamy. This bleeding experiment is tutored by a bleeding yesterday. Dead as regards all participation, alive in inculcation as the fierce oratory of battling guns. And the thing we learn from this Bancroft battle volume is that right will win the war. Temporary defeats are trivial things when weighed in the balances of God. He wants and means well by this world and will not sit a calm, careless spectator while evil weighs down with its infernal bulk and crushes the world and smothers it. We must shake hands with the dead to know the touch of the hands of the living. These times making faces at the future like grim gargoyles from a roof become less fearful and fearsome when viewed at long range, and so viewed they are perceived to be specters of things which suffer no incarnation.

The parallel, the fussy little German reincarnation now making faces at the whole world, will in due time become a perpetuated grimace which

will scare nobody and will mainly serve to make everybody laugh. This is the prince of The-Things-That-Ought-Not-To-Be and That-Must-Not-Be and That-Will-Not-Be. George III and his minions who assented to his crazy, despotic, and distracted word were then a menace, now only an infelicity. What George III never dreamed to do he did, namely, enfranchise America and make the United States a co-custodian of the liberty of mankind. The words of men dead give an information totally different from their living intent. All those dull stratagems of the king's Cabinet, the Lord Norths, the Earl Butes and the Lord Howes and Cornwallises, seem now the fussy blotters of a page which in our day England would wipe clear by an alliance for perpetual freedom. Once, these paraded showy and periwigged as the clinging tapestries on the walls of a palace, now, discriminating descendants desire to hang some tattered finery over their faces so they may be forgot.

Plainly, the dead days are very vital days. We shall steady our nerves by an appeal to those programs of battle and defeat when men tramped stolidly to defeat like Washington's retreat from Long Island, not knowing into how hard a pass they were to come. Their ignorance is our enlightenment. We may well learn from them not to be scared, but to be awake. They will keep us from neurotics. They steady us by the sense that there is an Overruler of rulers. The great deeds

last; and Hunism then or now has no power to frustrate the grace of things. Some crossing of the Delaware will bring their frightfulness to catastrophe, and they shall whimper back into some fierce jeopardy to try to cleanse their hands of the horrid blood, not of battle, but of murder.

As I consider the way my life has taken through these years, it is an astonishment to perceive how much my mind and career have companied with the dead. While the touch and glance by the way have kept the laughters alive in my soul, and while I knew my contemporaries were the living folks among whom I dwelt, I now perceive how I was constant contemporary of the dead. Not those I met on the street were my familiars as those I met at night with the lit lamp among my books. Longfellow died when I was just come to college, but dead and buried he was seen a friend as when at Craigie House he saw the River Charles go mutely by. His voice lost none of its sweet wistfulness by death.

I recall once when speaking in New York city at a banquet I was co-speaker with Richard Watson Gilder, that slender reed which the winds blew upon to create sweet melody and illustrious music. Then, a brief time after, he passed to the Land of Peace, of which he had never before been citizen, though I never felt to weep at his death; for his autographed Poems in my library wear the touch of his hand like the lingering of a kiss on our lips from one greatly beloved. God's Acre is

not only the most populous city of our world, but holds the most vital population. They have no sick nor tired days: they know no bleak east winds nor foggy coast: they encounter no burning day of summer drought-winds; their leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever they do shall prosper. If I or any were to chart the immense intrusions on his soul, those mighty moods like the vast sea at tide, he should be compassed about by voices which in the tables of mortality were scheduled among the silences. Their voices trumpet most. Their bugles are not as Tennyson's "Horns of elfland faintly blowing," but as those trumpets set to blow the reveille of resurrection.

What this amounts to clearly is argument for immortality. Death does not quiet things down: death tunes things up. It tones things up. Genius dies, and when his living face vanishes from the ways he often trod then are his lineaments hung out on the wall of the sky so all persons along their busy ways may, without stopping to look, behold them. Who goes out to the graveyard may label his excursion "A visit to the deathless." Life is so prodigal an exploit as to be impossible to be got rid of. Job of the desert spoke of things leaded in the rock forever and my lord Horace Flaccus, poet friend of Mycaenus, talked of tables of brass. He of the desert and he of the city had a mind on the continuing of oneself, a grave endeavor in spite of things, whereas the scheme of things seems to be fashioned to preserve self by

the nature of self. Grant endures solely by being Grant; soul endures by being soul. Such as stammer out cachinnatory words about "We cease from life" do slight credit to themselves, seeing they have fattened themselves on dead immortals. Those who read Shakespeare to marvel at him and rejoice in him are poor arguers for a day of death. The dead who being dead yet speaketh are the dead who did not die. They fooled us by a funeral into stolidly believing them dead. A funeral is a theatrical spectacularity, a bit of gaudy pantomime which gulls the gullible who bromidically rehearse, "What I have seen I know." It is a pity to be so witless and dupable. Does not the firmament of the world's majesty continually resound with the diapason, "The immortal dead," which, when we weigh the meaning of words, expresses a contradiction? "Immortal" belies "dead." The deathless dead—yet think what a cavalier way to accost death. Really we should be more polite to so ancient a potentate as King Death, though now that we think of it, he has never been other than unmannerly with us; so rub his name off the page of the Doings of the World. Read the births and omit the deaths. They do not count. Only births count.

It is a thing to make a soul delirious with joy to consider this continued springtime of life and to elucidate it with ourselves is setting down our mortal helpers to our souls. Father, mother, daughter, son, husband, wife, whose wings made

momentary breath upon our cheeks as they fared forth as going from where to where. And we shall not write far but that as we turn eyes back over the pages of our lives we shall find page after page scribbled over with the names of the dead, the dear and sainted dead. What high thing have I set quiring in the choir loft of my soul which has not been told me or been illuminated for me by the dead deathlessnesses?

Have we recalled that our American Emerson —our American solitary—had thousands of quotations on his lips? Yet had we counted him original. He was out under the sky when the comet passed over and the dust of that far passage sifted on his speech. He talked much with the dead when he walked alone in the woods; and in the wandering Concord ways the yesterdays took liberties with him. What he took to be a pine tree's melancholy harping was the vesper murmuring of the celestial dead. John Burroughs is alive, Richard Jefferies is dead—I speak after the manner of men—yet do we know it or imagine it? The voice of Jefferies sounds as near and as clear as the voice of Burroughs. No rasp of death is in the throat of "The Story of My Heart." Both lovers of wild things are hearty and both are out of doors, where we wish to be with them.

Tiplady's books of battle, The Cross at the Front, and The Soul of a Soldier are not more voices of battle than Hankey's A Student in Arms; and Tiplady is Methodism and here in the

flesh, and Hankey was Church of England man and dead in the flesh, slain on the windy field of war, but lustily immortal in the spirit. And that extraordinary chapter in Empey's Over the Top, entitled "The Coward," which records a great soul tragedy leaping into the very noon of a great soul conquest and the writer thereof must be set down as a servant of all in the writing of it, nevertheless not more resonant with the rich tones of life than Hankey's The Black Sheep. Both stories laugh out loud, shout out loud with redemption. They clamor hope like a company of angels.

Clearly, we are kinsmen of the dead. Our playfellows are the children of eternity. This radiant springtime is on us where no autumnal tears drip on the cheeks, but only vernal youth and shaping of new leaves and the putting forth of fresh blossoms, beautiful as immortelles of the peaceful land which lies past all stormy waters and rude winter winds. Counting our rosary, one will tell off the beads which have the spring beauty of the fadeless amaranth, the dead who are the surest of our contemporaries.

Andrew Lang has a volume entitled Letters to Dead Authors; only they are not dead. Dickens is not dead. Thackeray is not dead. Tennyson is not dead. We must have noted how in our passing days these men start out on the open road in the most unexpected places and call us to a standstill for sheer delight in the meeting of them. I defy you to say to their faces, "Ye are

dead," for should they not be able to retaliate, "Ye are the dead, we be the ever-living"? Jan Ridd is not dead, nor Lorna Doone, nor dear Mr. Lorry, nor Miss Pross, nor Lucie Manette, nor Sydney Carton; Henry Esmond is not dead, nor that sweet love who became his wife. Laura is not dead, nor Beatrice. Chaucer is not dead, nor Dante, nor great, grave Milton. They died, but abide the great dead Masters of Life, which means they are not in the great way dead at all. They are triumphantly alive. They seem so greatly alive as that beside them we lesser men in life seem peripatetic corpses.

I have as a birthday gift from the woman I love most in the world The Stones of Venice, in three volumes, dignified, edifying, and they lie on my library table one on one like Venice stones, wrought majesties grown old, and each volume is autographed by the great master who penned the æsthetic and ethical story recorded here. John Ruskin's hand has traced this name; and his hand, his writing hand, has pressed this page, and his name perfumes the page like "Rosemary for remembrance"—(Thank you, Will Shakespeare). I cannot feel Ruskin dead with these tumultuous books in my sight and my touch, any more than years agone when as a lad I met this genius of soul and heard his challenge for the seeing heart and the radiant delight in things visible and tangible. He haunts me now as he did then and I opine he will forever. He seems

so alive and well and wonderful. I thank God for him when I pray. He still loves the sea and the clouds mid-sky and the running water and the moody sunset and climbing mountain unafraid of dawn, and the gray cathedral walls and mute tower smitten with a hurricane of bell-voices full of prayer. Ruskin has no past tense; he dwells in a resistless present. No living master voice thrills me now as this dead master of Life. All the living poets, great and greater and less great (and I fault them not nor flout them), Noyes and Peabody, and Bridges and Oxenham, and Seeger, and Lindsay and Masefield and the rest, I cannot reckon equal to one triumphant blast on his gold trumpet, which Robert Browning gave when he wrote "Prospice," which for sheer triumph over death in these days sown to death and beyond death and glorious vistas, shining away into eternity, outsings all present voices. And the dead? Lord, thou knowest. I get them mixed so, these living and those dead. The breath of the dead is hot as fire upon my cheek and heart and their voices haunt me like the trumpetings of stars. So vigilant, so masterful, those men of old who refuse to grope along the crypts of death yet walk like shining waves across a shining sea under a summer sky.

In a twilight hour when the day's voices were becoming inarticulate, if a body were to begin to con over with a lifetime friend of his heart, his friends of a lifetime, dwelling on names lovingly

and loiteringly, as if he kissed lips he loved, would he, enumerating his friends, omit the names of those who had passed out barefooted and silent as the footsteps of stars? Nay, he would include them. His heart would make no mistake nor fumble once. If he recalled afterward his twilight conversation, his head might mistake some name then uttered, but his heart would correct him. His heart would not permit the crude editing his brain would give. The heart is right—it has that habit. Our friends are all in the summer land of those who wander to and fro by stream and sea and search of mountain for the dawn. Sunlight or starlight, it matters not to those dead masters of life. So, thinking vagrantly and very tenderly about our soul helpers, loving them as a man might love his birthplace and to find how little odds death makes; for we think them gone but to find them here—and a sweet and wistful company they are who help us now as they helped us then, and smile the while. This quest for the awakeners of the soul casts a noble shadow. I know not any Alp or Rocky or Himalaya to fling shadow so preeminent and conducive to adventure. The shadow death casts is life. We are compelled by the high compulsion of the undeniable vitalities to affirm the masterfulness of the dead. So vital they are, they will not taste death. They spit it out as a bitter herb. As they were at their best when they were with us, they stay. Charles Lamb and Sam Johnson and

gaunt Lincoln, and ocean-voiced Tennyson, and calm Whittier, with his vesper sparrow sadness in his throat, are not dead but sleeping, or dead—and masters of life.

The putting of the thought is inconsequential. The thought is consequential, and owns all the skies above the soul. And out of this comes the conclusion that, dying, we shall not disappear but shall step out in a ministry immortal, shall walk by wings as angels have learned to do, shall gather no dust of passing on the garments of journey. We shall go far journeys on smiling wings and bear in either hand a lamp to put at any unlit door where children sleep afraid a little of the dark.

VII

TAKING ONESELF TOO SERIOUSLY

Among the microbes, which are very dangerous and to be guarded against with all diligence, is the taking oneself too seriously. To be a fool may not be set down as a sin and yet it leads to chief sins. "Thou shalt not be a fool," would be a good commandment and one for which there is real need and one which would be kept right busy all days of the year. Such a commandment never would have a day off, but would display all hours of busy day and busy night the placard "This is my busy day." It may not be wicked to be a fool, but it is irreligious, inasmuch as the gospel is against waste. The gathering of the fragments of sense would prove a taxing profession howbeit (so far as regards society) one of splendid service and extraordinary remuneration. The fragmentarily-wise and the pretty-generally-foolish are not simply fantastical like Launce and his fellow canine, but are wickedly ruinous. The cap and bells are worn by the king's fool and donned as legitimately by the king and the courtiers. King Lear's fool was so profoundly unfoolish, so widely wise, as that he breaks our hearts while he tries vainly to endow the foolish king with brains. He has a task too taxing even for his powers. The cap and bells adorn King Lear, only he refuses to

wear them. Possessing the thing, he refuses the sign of the thing. King Arthur's fool sobbing in the darkness and the gathering rain, "I am thy fool, and I shall never make thee smile again," is as profound pathos as ever sobs in Alfred Tennyson, poet laureate. How could jest drip from the lips of such a fool as sobs so as to break the hearts of all of us? And yet here is the point of pith and meaning and so easy to be missed. Just because he was a wit and has humor could he lurch to such sea-sorrow. The perpetually lachrymose are not the souls most ladened with sorrow nor freighted most with tears. They weep so copiously as to be out of the real substance of sorrow. The spirits which smile and sing like birds swaying on swaying reeds in Summer are those whose wells of sorrow are at the brim. A bird could lean its yellow bill and drink their tears, so full the well is—but only God knows it. The facetious are likely to be habited in inward sorrow. The laughter of them is close kinsman of sorrow and of pain. By no mischance is such a fun-poet as Hood author of "Bridge of Sighs" and that eternally-young sob of ill-requited labor "The Song of the Shirt." Nor is there anything *outre* in that, that man of tireless and versatile mirth, Jack Falstaff and the Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's court, should at their dying set the whole world sobbing until it was as if all their scattered laughters which had been flung about into the sky with wild luxuriance like a summer

growth of fern and vine, by the chill of death on a sudden had been thickened into cloud, widespread, to obscure the sky and then the cloud had fairly drenched the world with rain. These deathbeds have all the world sobbing by them. This neighborliness of tears and laughter may well compel a steadfast look.

Laughter is redemptive, sanitary. There is an intellectual sanitization we should give heed to. To keep the personality open to the facts of things is a study which calls for teachers apt to teach.

Taking oneself too seriously precludes the getting exact images of things and conduces to getting a certain cartoon effect, whereas life is not a cartoon but a character. Things are sanely set on a sane landscape under a sane sky. Life is not lugubrious though fraught with sadness; life is not a joke though filled with jokes. Also a clown is more likely to get at the secret of the world than the perpetually morose. "The mourner goeth about the streets" though we are not given to understand that he reports the facts of the street accurately. The body who takes himself too seriously will write no tragedy though he may supply a character in comedy.

The taker of himself too seriously has no weighing apparatus with which, from time to time, to get at the avoirdupois of things. His specific gravity seems phenomenal and totally out of all proportion to the estimate of the community. Indeed, the community (which in the eyes of the

taker of himself too seriously) is a frivolous person given over to gayety and little conceits, and is ruinously remiss in activity and progress. He severely eyes the frivolous many, being himself neither frivolous nor given to laughter, but so sternly sedate that he could edit a Book of Lamentations over the unseemly laughter of the whole world, aside from himself. He feels the weight of society upon him alone. It weighs much and lacerates the shoulders of that servant who must wear the world's work which the many shoulders should bear and will not. He often wears glasses, the two eye-pieces being serious symbols of his serious intent. He cannot leave himself at home and go out and frisk. He never goes out, and he will not frisk. He stays and tends the stuff. He is always dubious and sees signs in the heavens and the earth, but never the signs of spring or promise. Late autumn and congealing winter are his season. I did not say "seasons"—I said season. The fall and winter are mingled with this deeper (that is, denser) soul. He feels he may never lie down to sleep lest the sky should sink and the milky way should wander crazily along the heavens and go to smithereens. The heavens cannot be trusted. They must be run; and this serious brother must run them. No alternative is possible. He scrutinizes and would control all the world, both the doings of the cook and the doings of Providence. He sees graft and grafters and gambling and thuggery everywhere; and if him-

self should not look after things, they would go odds worse than they now do. He is credentialed to see what the many cannot see and to lift the cry, "The enemy is upon us." He is ubiquitous and does not sleep. "Vigilance is the price of liberty," that is, his vigilance. He knows not such a thing as a deputy, for to deputize an officer would be to trust the deputy and to trust the deputy would be to allow the ability of the deputy, whereas the very beams on which the floor of this seriosity is laid are that there is but one who is trustworthy, it being superfluous to name who that one is. He considers that a representative democracy is no democracy, a direct primary being the sole organon of a precise democracy and himself must be the primary. "Trust no one save thyself" is the fundamental proposition of this astute citizen, who is the one licensed inspector of public weal and manners and procedure in general. Really, he feels he must have written the Doom's-Day Book, and if he were to go away for a few minutes he would chain the book, yet the chain might have an imperfect link so the book might be abstracted; hence he will not leave the book. As certain bank functionaries have their meals served in the cages, thus obviating the going out for dining, so this serious taker of himself has his meals served where he holds and retains the Doom's-Day Book. Nothing must go at loose ends, hence he will hold the ends. The wear and tear on the soul is terrific when one is so

situated. The universe is rather large and taking entire charge of it requires strict attention, vigilant nerves, and muscles of steel.

He sometimes considers that the universe should be contracted so as to give himself a little needed leisure. He feels and says sometimes, even oft times, in a weary voice, that for one man this burden is unbearable though he feels it must be borne for humanity's sake. One must not shirk one's responsibilities. That would be cowardice. However weighty the load, the fit man *must* bear it, complainingly of course, yet bear it, complainingly, would there were more who could! But it falls on the fit few, and though they break under the load, like an overloaded wagon, their wheels must revolve, so that though there be little locomotion there may be due commotion.

This serious taker of himself takes deep breaths, groans much when he has no stomach ache and dispenses fog and climatic inclemency. When he has made inclemency he considers that, metereologically, he is a success. His favorite wind is the east wind. Not the wind of the Israelites, for it brought quails and an epicurean dinner to those manna-satiated diners. No, his east wind is that which blows on the Maine coast and visits the marrow of the bones and gives the shivers, or it is the English east wind which blows in winter and fairly shivers the roots off the trees. He has a complacent theory that when the world is uncomfortable it is to be congratulated.

If you dine at a table next him, he looks at his victuals with a sad and rheumatic look as bidding them farewell. He is conspicuously absent-minded. What is good fellowship to him? Eating is putting edibles to good use when himself is being fed; for clearly no man can bear burdens systematically as he does unless he eats. There is no pleasure to him in eating. Far and away from that. Petrify the thought. Nay! More nays! He eats so as to bear the accumulated burdens of the world. Therefore eating is serious. It is a doleful duty. He is stocking up the commissary so that the campaign may proceed.

His eyes peer like those of a hotel inspector looking for a hole in the bed sheet. The frivolous laughter and badinage of the other guests do not reach his quagmire of seriosity. He delves apart. He may get a worm and will therefore be kinsman of the early bird; there will then be two birds. That thought should cheer him but does not, for he feels that the other bird would not be much of a fowl. Though there seem to be two there is in reality but one. He is the bird. Every road leads to himself. Rome was a temporary capital for the earth; himself is the settled, deliberate, capital; and rightly, yea, and necessarily all roads to him. If the Wise Men from the East should report at his abode, he would not be surprised. It would simply be another natural event which certified that these Orientals, whose names he would not ask, *were* wise men.

This taker of himself too seriously breaks his teeth on the gravels (to speak in the dental phrase of Jeremiah when he was busy lamenting "Lamentations"). This exercise would not be a hilarity to the many, but to him is better than taking a holiday. When he hears a tooth crack or break he groans, "Some one who wears the world's interest in his every thought must break his teeth on the gravels." It never occurs to him to spit the gravels out and not chew them and so save his teeth. To chew gum is more commendable than chewing gravels, and, besides, it enriches a certain well-known gum manufacturer.

This too-serious taker of himself never rests, nor, be it said in strict parenthesis, will he let anybody else rest. He tires everybody. People in his house cannot retire, they must go to bed, and by stealth. In the morning he gives a melancholy wheeze to his word "*you* rested well?" not at all as being interested in your welfare, but as at once resenting it, and suggesting that for *himself* there was no rest. While *you* slept careless of the universe *he* was waking, drying its axles so they would creak more. An uncreaking universe is obnoxious to him. If it creaks he feels it is going. He loves the danger signal and puts one up on good roads as a sign that this highway is dangerously safe. A short hundred years ago a murder was committed here before there was a street, even before there was a village. Danger! He warns the children that a banana peeling is

sometimes dropped on the sidewalk, therefore let them not walk on the sidewalk, but walk in the middle of the street, for in that safety and privacy, nothing worse will befall them than being struck by a street car or run over by an automobile.

He frequents the almanacs and patent medicine literature, for in their extemporized weather and chronic ailments he feels at home. The world is a hospital, anyway. The presence of the de-legged and diseased he considers a benefit. He foretold it.

So he creaks on and they employ a creaky undertaker to bury him. Then, the world makes merry. It has holiday.

VIII

NEC TIMEO

The death-fear of great-heart Sam Johnson plows a deep furrow in his burly history. How that fear cut at his face like a sword which never sought sheath! Nor need we wonder. Death is a sinister figure ever in sight and ever in everybody's sight along all roads of life. Death will not hide himself from view. He swaggers: modesty is not in his mien. He has an exaggerated opinion of himself. Just because no one may elude him he thinks greatly of himself. He is only a barnacle attaching himself to everybody's ship though anybody knows the barnacle is no advantage to the ship. Quite otherwise.

In the pages of the gruff old literary dictator, the haunting fear of death constantly intrudes in the deeper moments and movements of his soul Death peers grimly down, and the great brain and the great heart are beaten down by it. Beasts have no fear of death. They solely strive for life. A wounded animal or bird is a pathetic fearlessness. Death-fear comes from thought. The passing out into the insufferable space where all is sightless as a mist slanted through by a cold and drizzling rain! It is amazing to be alive: it is amazing not to be alive. To look at any one's

corpse lying cold, pulseless, white, majestically wept over but not wakened by the weeping—who of us but is hit hard by that scene? To have been here in the house of life so long and then to vacate and leave the key in the lock but never to turn it again in all, *all* the years which smoke along the narrow pathway of the centuries, that chills the blood of most of us. We have contracted a taste for life; we have fallen into its homely ways; we have camped by its fires lit by our own hands and cut the wood with which we have fed the homely kitchen fire where our daily meal was prepared; we have forded the stream wimpling along the shallows or have waded hip deep ("Wakarusa," said the Indian wader), and have followed the gentle cattle home and have regaled the chickens with a meal till they looked on us wholesomely as their givers of bread, when they were in reality our givers of meat; we have worked the day through till the dark, and have sat down in the gloaming with a quiet voice to listen to the whip-poorwills; we have gone to sleep, and at the end of the night have risen with the dawn to take up life's same simple tasks anew with gladness and singing; we have gone to church and have prayed and hoped and sung and repented, have caught the world's joy to our heart, have listened to the world's quips and joined in the world's laughter, till nothing of all the doings of this big, strong world seemed incongruous, we of it, and it of us; and then some time near by it will all stop like an

outworn watch and others shall light the fire and fare forth to the field and carol with the dewy dawn; and the flowers and winds and woodsides and prairies will not even know we have departed! Such thoughts dig cruel rowels in our sides till they bleed like a soldier to his death. Blessed for most of us that we are so crowded and happy and tired as not to have time to think of these things often, scarcely at all; but it rushes to be gone, to vanish like a swift flying dove vanishes in the darkening heavens. Death is not neighborly although ever near. I blame not beloved, wholesome, great Johnson, that death smote him in the face like a plowman's hand, so that he winced. It was natural.

His grasp of elemental humanness and moralities did not let him look sidewise at Death. It was ever his bluff way to look things and men full in the face; but to look at Death, he was afraid. It was pitiful to hear his voice tremble and to see his color vanish at the voice of Death. Pitiful but not strange; no, never strange. Death is ever at the advantage: we never at the advantage. Death is as a robber in the dark—you cannot see him, but he can see you, and can stab and slash. You fight at random, he with virulent sagacity. His pugnacity is bloody and mortal in intent; hazardless to him, hazardful to you. He never will fight in the open; for ought we know, Death is a slinking coward.

To flout brave, blunt, boisterous Johnson is

singularly easy but not equally witful. Johnson is as natural as swaying shadows and the falling rain and as transparent as hill air. The adventure into the desert where there is no way, is fraught with nescience. We must grow resolute to face it. Death comes hard to the resolute hand and skilled brain and restless and resistless human energy. It seems so like spilling peculiarly precious jewels into the deep parts of the sea, this adventuring of the Death. What advantages it that we die? Might we not as well stay? Would it crowd the tavern if we stayed?

Now, that is the sobriety of the doctrine of death. But for him we should crowd the tavern of life. If the Platos and Pauls and Dantes and Shakespeares and Miltons always stayed, there would be no room for all the rest of us. The tavern-keeper would say carelessly to adventurers come to his hostel, "All the rooms are full; no room for you in the inn," as was once the pitiful case when the Lord of all the worlds there are came and asked a night's lodging and then slept amongst the cattle! No, death serves a great world purpose. He empties the rooms so that newcomers may be lodged. Yet not the less, it is hard on the old lodger who took his "ease at his inn" to be thus ordered out and to be turned out in the dark and the hearth fire and lamp extinguished in his room. Why should we not be afraid? The method of death is ruthless and we cannot get used to it. I have seen it so often, have

heard the tear-plash and have seen the tearful hand leap to the heart that was in pain like a sword thrust because the beloved should open the door no more. *No more!*

Dying seems so like stepping into a void, like walking off a sea cliff to whirl into a shrieking, shambling sea, and the place that knows us, knows us no more: but there shall we struggle in the regurgitant waves that tiger about us in the stifling void. In the Titanic there was something frankly horrible when the cold Labrador sea without anger and in placid peace sucked the floating humans down nor paused to listen to their cry. I saw them; I see them now, bubbles that floated a moment and broke and left but a drop of wet breath on the ocean's face. And that was how Death looked as old Johnson peered into his face. I do not wonder that he shivered and drew the kindly coverlet of loving companions over his head to shut out the fearsome look.

And yet is not this essay entitled "Nec Timeo"? Has the author forgotten his theme? He has, in his lifetime, forgotten much, and we shall not be surprised if his theme has been forgotten. Though in good sooth, it has not. He has been writing on the horror of darkness, the bleak moor where, wading in the sullen dark, the morass catches the traveler's feet and sucks them slowly and then swiftly down, but sucks down while the road winds on and the stars go out and all sobbing is silent as the dead. Brains cannot ignore Death nor his

crude laceration and we all so helpless and forlorn! This is not a chapter, rather a half-chapter in the serious drama which could readily eventuate in a tragedy with blood and swords and sobs and calls of force and fear and great dying, the slaughter of the mightiest battle man ever knew. We need not try to pull ourselves into saying Death is not grim and horrible. He is both; and more. This writer recalls having spent nearly a week with Daniel A. Goodsell a scant fortnight before he died. That it was a golden week goes without the saying. That quick mentality was at ease and in poise and his foil was never sheathed. His conversation was scintillant. He spoke out of his heart. "I never felt better nor so well in years," said the deep voice; and in a fortnight he was as dead as earth, though his memory is like the fragrance of growing things at every blossoming spring.

Dr. Johnson was as robust a moral intelligence as our race has ever known and has spoken as witful words concerning eternal righteousness as any man since the apostolic days. He believed in God; he believed also in Christ but had not caught the Sun full on his face, the Sun called Christ. He was not quite master of the daylight. The valley of the shadow of death darkened his noon. He was an earthly normal. He was of the earth earthy, but not regally could he see the Lord from heaven. When we watch Johnson we can never do so with a sense of rancor nor with gelid soul.

He was so human, so humorous, so child of the clod, so winged and so broken-winged, one of the most human humannesses ever begotten on the ground.

He smelled the grave breath, but not the lily breath. He felt the winter of Death, but not the spring with bird call, with flower call, with Christ call. The voice of Jesus on a tossing wave of the sea in the night calling cheerily above the toil of rowers and the crush of waves and the creak of oar-locks where hid sailors leaned at the oars, the call "Be of good cheer. It is I; be not afraid," that voice Johnson did not quite hear, though he needed to hear it as we all need to hear it. What a brave light in the darkness and how quenchless! "Be not afraid." That is our luminous word, and needed. Without it life is bound to become hysterical at sight of Death and the grave.

"Nec timeo"—neither fear I—grows out of Christ's "Be not afraid," as a tulip grows out of its bulb. It is not that the grave has been denaturized, but that Christ has shown a way out of the grave. We are on a road and we cannot be stopped. "The grave is an inn of a pilgrim on the way to Jerusalem" are sweet words which mark an Apocalypse. To meet Death, then, with a habitual smile is a great deliverance; and no sane man can deny it. Brave people have ever died bravely. But there has been much dying which has been as the dying of a criminal at the

scaffold, more than a little spectacular. Christian dying has been putting on the wedding garment and going in to the marriage. Said an aged and beautiful minister of God as he lay dying and thanking a preacher friend for having come to see him one other time, "I shall soon see God." Frankly, talk like that is too deep for tears and too high for stars. It springs above the head a sky quite out of all human devising or human revising. A faltering breath, a broken speech, a failing sight so that with a sob of Tennyson, "The casement slowly grows a glimmering square," and at that moment of dusky vision, upon the man rushes an Apocalypse of the very far off to which one flash of wings will bear the soul! That is glorious, glorious! "There is a way out," is what the Christ-version of death has to say. No trepidation, only a waiting until God shall give us a good-night kiss.

In Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar" is seen a hesitancy like that of Johnson, but a looking a little deeper into the breaking day. That poem has the light turned low and then a sigh at the dark, a half sobbing and hesitant setting forth into the boat called Death. And here is a normal expression of our earthly life touched gravely by the Christ, but not washed with the sunlight of the Christ. It is an accurate rendering into speech of the twilight of faith, which would yet advance and not retrace its dull steps on the wave-washed sands. It is Tennyson all through and through,

half hesitant, half unhesitant, lit with the gloaming—but still, out toward Christ. Brave and strong and hushed his poem is, and lonely. In it is no triumphant rush of voice, no angel's song, no abundant morning where "bloom the lilies of eternal peace."

"Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

"But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

"Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

"For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar."

So Tennyson's twilight just passed a little beyond Dr. Johnson's fear and frankly expressed horror of the grave, yet with a wild clutch at the pierced hand of Christ. And the relationship between tavern-haunting old Sam Johnson and the lonely, solitary Tennyson is alluring and very heartening to thought and faith. Two manly souls, both looking in the same direction, both knowing they could not stay for always here,

both knowing they could not live alone and that they dare not die alone, both broken into in their mental and spiritual fervors by the voice of God, both looking askance at Death; and the face of Johnson is pale and the face of Tennyson is quiet: and yet I will profess that old Johnson minds me of brave Peter, feet sinking in the weltering wave, and who cannot disengage himself from the cumbering death, but with a wild cry brings himself help, "Lord, save, or I perish." The collocation of the death-mood of Johnson and the death-mood of Tennyson greatly moves my soul.

Howbeit, the unnamed preacher's "I shall soon see God," has a spaciousness which neither lexicographer nor poet knew. His words had wings for flight and sky which theirs have not.

Paul's death-mood is like trumpet's blowing—is like Enoch Arden when his voice lifted and sang, "A sail, a sail!" Paul had learned what he knew from Christ. He said so; and we know so. And an *aside* of John touching Jesus is like a sunup; that aside is where it is remarked that Jesus "knowing that he had come forth from the Father and must return to the Father." What a transcendent view of death that is! How shall we grovel, after hearing talk like that or know darkness after having had sunup like that? In a word, Jesus's view of death was he was going home. And people are not afraid of going home, only homesick for it.

And Paul, whose schoolmaster was Christ, sings

but does not sob, "The time of my departure is at hand." The boat is ready and the sea is here; and as regards death, it is to him only "to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." Paul is not acquiescent but triumphant. He wants to try the sea. "Now we know in part, but then! but then!"

And into this version of Nec timeo, the "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil," strides great Browning's very great "Prospice," quite the most triumphant march tune to which death has ever been set, since the sayings of Jesus and Paul. The poem requires silence as a comment. It is too triumphant for commentary. The rush, the shout, the absence of fear, the fight, seem to say there is fun in death. This poem has no kinsman. One poem like "Prospice" suffices while the earth grows hoary. We shall be singing that tune when time makes voyage to eternity.

"Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.

NEC TIMEO

I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall come first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!"

Nec timeo!

IX

THE REVELATION OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE

Adam Clarke, that erudite Methodist commentator, refused to write a commentary on the book of Revelation, whereupon some humorless brain proceeded to do what the Irish keen-wit had refrained from doing, and the result is printed in Clarke's Commentaries. A commentary is an attempted explanation, wherefore the Revelation, which is a conflagration, does not yield to the commentator's pen.

This present writer, therefore, is in haste to remark that he attempts no comment on this wonderful book. He is ill in arithmetic and so will not cipher on the number of the beast, 666. Were he an arithmetician, he would be dissuaded from the sum aforesaid in view of the sorry array of figures which those wise in numbers have inflicted upon us, though not to the getting a correct answer. Possibly it were better to let God do his own figuring. God can cipher.

The solitary purpose of this writer is to stand or kneel and wonder and rejoice and worship. That is not methematical: that is human and discreet. This is how The Revelation appeals to one body—If left in the hands of an untutored mind

who dwelt on the edges or in the heart of the desert, or dwelt rimmed round by the unshored ocean, by perusal of this book of rapture he would become a poet laureate. I should hesitate to put this book of fire in my pocket lest it should compel immediate conflagration. The Parsees should love this book, and would, should they read it. It is the volume of the multi-suns. Fire burns on every promontory and blazes in every low-sagging valley. Sometimes a volcano is in eruption giving out a wild flaunting banner of sullen flame, sometimes it is moonrise and the sky is grown silvern with that shadow light which God endowed when he thought out the moon, sometimes a starry radiancy of evening skies, sometimes a sun or a galaxy of them—but light allwheres, so that in this book there is no unlit room. Radiancy appears ubiquitous and promissory of being eternal. All dark spots shall in due time leap out into author tative glory.

This is the Glory-book. Shadows and darkness are to be burned up. "Let there be light," it would seem, is the motto of this last book God took in hand to write. He is banishing the dark; he is ensphering the dawn so that it may make an eternal sunrise for the soul.

"The Revelation" is a book of souls. Souls only count. The world whereby the race has set such uncommon store is, in this book, on the way to extinction like a too-old volcano crater. Like the leaves on a green tree when the fire burns too

near, the world's substance withers, shrinks, falls. All solid things, as man had reckoned, proved volatile; the spirit things bound out into the landscape of eternity as the real substantialities. In this book is the certain authoritative change of the center of gravity. Cities, mountains, kingdoms, governments made exodus, while the impalpable human soul, sainthood, the church, the Lamb of God, the Resurrection and the Life, the Beginning and the End, the Almighty God, eternal conscience, the authority of the soul, the fruits of patience, the glory of goodness, the perpetuity of holy influence, the inevanescence of love, the calm, eternal preeminence of God, the subsiding as in a bitter sea of all earthly kingdoms and dominions and from the dim swirl and wrath of that wide, wild water, the emergence of the Kingdom, when "the kingdoms of this world shall become a kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ"—these are some of the things which no diminution can overtake and no mutilation can maim. The things we, in history, had supposed were perishable and which we feared for and trembled over with brooding heart, are shown to be the eternal, the eventual immortalities. The universe has swapped centers. Matter must make way for spirit. Not that matter is a myth, but that it is diseased and is perishable and that it makes its blinded way toward sepulture while spirit, open-eyed and mighty-strengthened, makes way into everlastingness where tears dim eyes no more nor

sorrow waits to deck the brow with withered leaves.

The Revelation is eternity on fire. God has seen fit to put eternity in a bonfire to the end that man might see what could not be burned up in any fire. We need such illumination. We had long enough had our torch of rushlight blowing in the wind to see by. Behind us was lit in a poor fashion, but before us was a valley of the shadow of death, and this side of that stood the mountain of the shadow of life. We were heading into shadow. The tender saying of an old-time singer was, tenderly "He lighteth my candle." And our need is for a lamp for our feet and a light to the path. When the stars are invisible or their tremulous light not enough to walk by, what shall lamp that night? Then cometh Christ with that song of daylight, "I am the light of the world," howbeit, himself passed on a sunny day through sunny skies into a sunlight behind the sunlight and our graves are with us yet—Ah yet! And evil was raucous-voiced and wickedness wore its bloody sword in its right hand and smote night and day, day and night, and history was like a beggar in the sun who loitered rather than journeyed and limped as always lame and begged with beggar's lips in beggar's humdrum utterance; and we plodded into a shadow afoot; and then God set eternity on fire that we might have the nighttime of our darkness lit, and flung into the bold flaming outline of the serried mountain ranges

of eternity the deathlessness of righteousness to make us neighbors of heartsease rather than heartshurt because we saw that "the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." So when God has lit his light we do well to watch the conflagration on the landscape.

"The Book-of-Vision-of-the-Landscape-of-the-Long-Run," that is "The Revelation of Saint John the Divine." The Short-Run, we know that landscape. There have we dwelt. It is an uncertain land. There tears mix with the sunlight and we can scarcely focus our sight on a scene ere it is drenched with a storm or lost in some sudden midnight. The peevish landscape of the Now and Near is ever near us and ministers to constant perturbation. It unmans our spirit. We grow neurotic with its sudden and peevish changes. We cannot keep our heads nor are we quite schooled to keep our hearts. We have inward fever. Our lips parch sometimes even when we come to pray. Sleet stings in the face and eyes so that we cannot see even when we look. Who knows how things are going to come out? We walk by Faith. God says things will come out well and bids us bide in peace. So we try to do and so we do after our hectic fashion; but the way is long and we are only tarrying a brief space of a day or less, and we cannot command the landscape. While we look it shifts or vanishes. "How will things come out?" we weep or pray

sobbingly. Death stings us in the face, and by our tears our sight is blinded. "We touch God's right hand in the darkness and are lifted up and strengthened," howbeit we did not see, we could not see. The faces of our vanished beloved—we cannot quite set our eyes upon them. Where are our dead saints hid? Where do they stay while we are coming? Are they "kept by the power of God" for us near him? Soul, thou sobbest so in thy praying, and thine eyes are too full of tears to see when the clouds rush apart for a moment, so that ere thou canst brush the tears away to look, the vision is spent!

Then God sets eternity on fire for us to see by; and things invisible become apparent. Philosophy of History is a book we have read with less or more of information, yet here in The Revelation is that philosophy of history set on fire, and we see it not as on a page printed in black but on a landscape of eternity written in fire. "Earth's Holocaust" was what weird Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote of. "Eternal Holocausts" is what the patient God wrote of in the book of Revelation.

"We who are about to die salute you" (*moraturi salutamus*) was what the broken blades, called gladiators, sang in last refrain; and in The Revelation, the things that are not about to die (*non-moraturi salutamus*) salute you. The deathless things spring into the daylight and lift up their carol. The deathlessnesses are singing in the heavenly choir. This is the learning of the angels,

the anthem of the immortals, the pæan of the blood-washed who constitute the unfettered company of the redeemed—the hymnody of those who dwell near God about the throne.

The sublimity of The Revelation of Saint John the Divine is to be set against all literature. Only the book of Job and the Gospels, memorabilia of the Son of God, can be mentioned here without a lurch in the voice. Of earth's monographs, Milton's Paradise Lost, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, and Dante's Trilogy only can be spoken of. The Gospels give the days of His flesh; The Revelation gives the day of His spirit. The Gospels watch God at the cradle, at the well, on the dusty way, in the anguish, in the grave, at the resurrection. And we watch while we kneel. His glory! "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," was what one disciple long after said. In The Revelation his glory is his everyday apparel.

"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters."

This is the first picture painted of the Son of

God. John wrote a biography of Christ, our Lord, but not in all did he attempt a portrait. The family picture of the Saviour might well be omitted. The eternal picture of the Lord of Life and Glory we must possess. John the Beloved becomes the first painter of his Master. His portrait is a blaze of pure splendor, light—all light. I can scarcely watch, the glory blinds me so.

"Jove frowned and darkened half the sky," presumably is the sublimest conception Homer has of his god. Though when we set alongside of this that pure rush of light, the purple splendor and the sun-white splendor of the Revelation, we cannot see Olympic Jove. The light of The Revelation's splendor changes Homeric splendor to dim twilight.

Watch and see: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And

he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, and LORD OF LORDS."

Here is seen "A woman clothed with the sun" (what raiment!), and "the moon under her feet," and the revelator saw an angel standing in the sun (not touched with flame or fearful of it).

Poet, John Zebedee; preacher, John Zebedee; Beloved John Zebedee, further saw an angel "with one foot on the land and one foot on the sea" (and the angel stood as if his feet pressed on a granite floor).

He saw: "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. . . . And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."

He sat and yet did the world's work. He sat on a cloud and harvested the ground.

Here is the patience of the saints: "where are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

"And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices."

Ah me! this is glorious! The garments of eternity are very bright. No mourning gowns are worn in heaven!

"Clothed with a cloud"—we read of that; and "a rainbow was upon his head," and "his face was as it were the sun." Earth's imagery vanishes like a wasted dewdrop before sublimities like these. To be flatly accurate, there is no other sublimity when the revelator opens his lips.

He saw: "And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when he is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

He saw: "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree."

He saw how "Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." And he saw

"Thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

He saw souls. That is the Revelation in eternity. Souls we have not seen as yet. Men argue about them as if they were not. In eternity souls shall stand out apparent as the throne of God.

He saw: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

He saw man immortal.

He saw: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a

bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death; neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

He saw: "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates, on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." "And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz;

the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

He saw eternity at one with God.

He saw: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they

shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever." "Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." The Lord even the Lamb shall overcome, for he is Lord of Lord and King of Kings.

He saw and heard: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

He saw: "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."

And he heard: "And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, . . . and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."

And he saw: "And I saw another angel fly in

the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

He saw and heard: "And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshiped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned."

He saw and heard besides: "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer."

"I John saw these things and heard them."

No such sight-seeing has been afforded before, nor shall be afforded again until we go sight-seeing in eternity. He saw and heard! Here, angels are unfamiliar folk. There, they crowd every street and smile across all morning meadows and fill all choirs. Angels, angels everywhere and the redeemed folks, those who "came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes,

and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," those who have been scarred with fire and bitten by the lion's teeth and have suffered innumerable calumnies from wicked lips, there they walk in everlasting morning free from care; and God seeth them and smiles what time he looks their way.

The Book of Revelation of Saint John the Divine is the book of souls.

He saw souls. That is the Revelation in eternity. Souls we have not seen as yet. Men argue about them as if they were not. In eternity souls shall stand out apparent as the throne of God. They do not argue souls there! they see them. This is the book of the immortals. No Socrates, or Plato, nor Paul argues the immortality of the soul in that immortal country. For the angels and the redeemed folks would laugh such arguments down. They would know such argumentation pure childishness. There they possess a pure immortality. There the babies know themselves immortal, while here, their mothers wondered about it while their eyes were wet and their hearts were bleeding. Truly that is "The Better Land." It is the land of Christ the Lord. God there is visible and audible. God is everywhere and near, always near and they see his face! They walk with him. They live near him. They talk with him. Their east window opens on God's throne so that they possess eternal sunrise.

Here, where shadows gather and the night

comes on, where spring flowers wither and the grass grows sear, and the leaves at touch of the frost fall earthward wandering with the wind, here where partings bring frequent anguish to the heart and tears are customary things, here—but there—the sun up! There is where eternity puts faith into flower, and where faith is swallowed up in sight, and where the God of Love and Time and Eternity walks to and fro amongst his saints and makes them wonder that ever their hearts grew faint or that ever a sign was yearned for by their groping faith.

Those years of weeping shall be forgot and only laughter and tumults of harps and voices and multitudinous glories set to music by the First Musician; and The Revelation shall be swallowed up in the life and glory that shall be the common destination of the soul.

X

"DID YOU GET ANYTHING?"

On an early morning sown to gladness I was leisuring down a sunny river untouched by any wind, at peace with itself and all besides, and my boat making a narrow ripple, the perfection of artistry, my oars, dipping at their will and not at mine, which was seldom enough to suit a boat given to watching its own shadow in the stream, while from the tail end of the boat, a fish pole standing up vigilantly with much show of industry, though, so far as I observed, with little of the thing it had a show of, when a bright boy, intent on busy business and rowing right lustily and coming my way with all the perspiration of fishing in operation, sung out with a hullaballoo voice, "Did you get anything?" It was a cheery morning voice of a lad duly freckled with swimming and fishing, a lad with a hundred promises of achievement as the years should loiter by, and I had not in my heart to dismiss the question with an answer other than the one he expected, so the reply was "Not yet," though all my machinery of body and soul resented the question as an intrusion, a misnomer, and a heresy.

Not, as the fond reader may naturally opine, that I resented the question, because accuracy of

speech and veracity of intent prompted a negative rejoinder. No, fond friend, I am not enough of a fisherman to blush at piscatorial inability. I care less than nothing for the jeers of fishy folk who fish to catch. No shame is in me on the exhibit of an empty pole and line. The fewer fish caught the less weight to carry; and I was told by some perambulant know-everything that for a man in middle life to carry heavy burdens was unsanitary or undignified or unhealthy, I can't quite recall which, nor need I bend my memory to the tax of recalling. It does not matter; for they all run into one. The doctrine announced pleased me. My native indolence found this a convenient bulwark, and I were not the artful man my family has been trained (by me) to think me if I heed not so salutary a suggestion, and so the carrying of a long string of fish seems to me to be running directly in the face of Providence—a thing I design not to do.

No, my irritation, if that be the correct word to characterize my attitude when the bright lad shot his arrow of "Did you get anything?" straight into me, was not a sullen dislike to being caught catchless, but a settled quarrel I have with the malutility of the question, "Did you get anything?" which is vilely familiar on all roadways either of land or water. You are always being stung with that deer fly or punctured by that songbird called the mosquito. Many a day have men who should have known better and

women fair to see seriously prodded me with that irritating interrogatory, "Did you get anything?" As if a body ever went anywhere and got nothing! They mean—I know what they mean. I am no lackwit (by my own assertion); they mean: Did I get a fish? That is all they mean, as if I, who once wrote a poem, could be tied down to a wriggling line in the water when the sky is over me and under me; over me dappled with wind clouds vagrant, ethereal, far-voyaging with blue, more blue and far-blue, blue down to the land edge, blue to the sky-top; and under me as I drifted with idle content, an inverted sky drifted with clouds far, free, and a-voyaging between two sky azures, and then to have such a celestial voyage broken into by a dull apathy of "Did you get anything?" What opaque nothing am I not to get anything when heaven engulfs me in its splendor and amplitude? What is a puny bass tugging at my line matched with the sky tugging at my soul and calling softly, ever softly, "Fly to me and fly in me, far, farther, and datelessly"?

I always get something. All days are good for my fishing whether I fish by stream or dry land. All my hooks are baited and some will be bound to catch. If I miss a fish, I shall catch a lily, or a cloud or a spindrift from a wild-washed sea-wave, or a stream, or a glimpse into the soul where are horizon bars which push backward very far behind all stars and open for a moment and then close, not to be opened again. Shall I not be

radiant as June when all sweetness of living exhales odors like white clover, and shall I, like blowing wind, grasp, and get nothing? Am I as dreamless as that comes to? I pray the kind God to forbid it. Fishing is not the climax of my life: living is the climax of my life. The highest things beckon at my door and ask a drink from the living spring that warbles like birds in the hedge-row and I may not shut my door and lock it. I will sit out in front of my tent like Abraham long ago, and then no angels can pass by without hearing the hail of my invitation. I like lying in wait for angels, for morning and shadows, and the wild fleur-de-lis watching its gentle shadow in the stream, and the foam of virgin's bower and the sheen of vivid green on the lichens and the invitation on anything and everything. I will let no angel pass my door unaccosted. I was born for the sootless paths where stars with stars go journeying, and shall I be permitted to knit my soul to earthliness?

And shall I call "getting something" to be getting the unillustrious and the deficient? Is not a poem more to me than a bank account and the lilt of an unknown bird a fairer Eldorado than a hill of gold? Nor is it that I care not for the cash values of things. Cash buys things folks need. Christmases and a home that bids the storms defiance, and in its place and time a little space in God's Acre, above which wander the dusks and daysprings and where beloveds lie in quiet-

ness with all the hopes of resurrections, tearless and tender—these certainly require money—some money. And I break no puny lance with prosperity. I deride no civilization. I mope not where the bats soot the night with sultry and sooty wing. But to be shut in by a pocketbook, or more aptly, shut in a pocketbook, I resent. I strictly refuse to be bound in by the little. I who am built for the larger and the bewildering.

Did I get anything? That is no question for the likes of me. I always get something. Every rainbow has its pot of gold at either end, and every flock of birds its music and every rookery its dissonant melody and every night and every day its summons.

If a body have what Walter Savage Landor, speaking of Robert Browning, called the "inquiring eye," all roads shall lead somewhere and somewhere subtly sublime. I know many of them, having wandered along them, and many I have not loitered on. I make prophecy for the having so often invited my soul to my soul's content. There are no barren ways. I have youth enough to know that. Is it not drearily true that "Did you get anything?" means with hideous importunity, "Did you get some little thing?" It is a narrowing of the soul's eyes to slits, a squint of scrutiny to behold the unessential.

Those things the Gentiles seek (recalling the gentle indictment of Jesus) are not bad, but just little scrawny things instead of brawny things.

Were I choosing a room in a spacious hotel, I should not choose a room overlooking the gables of the city nor the roofs of the town, but should choose a room overlooking the ravishment of the sea. I have occupied a room that gave full view of the pile of de-vegetabled cans and superannuated rubbish and full-breath garbage cans, nor did I demur. They were necessaries; and the coverlet of the night covered them over. Better empty cans in which wholesome foods have been stored by a ripe civilization than the mussel-shell heaps inside an aboriginal cave. I quarrel not with the patches on the coat of civilization, yet I do not take my holidays inspecting its dilapidated mops and brooms. I would not be inattentive to the lowliest temporalities; but to the things eternal am I knit by kinships everlasting.

They hold my dreams by dusk and day and rivet my attention like a pageant of angels. I am heading their way. No tarnishment is on this unfitful firmament of my soul. The longer it lasts the more rare it grows. I know what I am about. I am about with my soul. We are wool-gathering betimes, but it is wool from golden fleeces of yellow flowers or fields of harvested wheat or sands of dunes cast up by wind and sea, or desert blazing in the sun, or silver fleeces of water anemones or early spring stars of flowers or white souls of praying women shot through and through with the wonder and beauty of sacrifice—they not

knowing it is sacrifice—woolgathering so enriching to the thought beyond raising sheep that nibble pastures to the ground, that we may turn them into mutton and to wool. Uncommercial gazers are my soul and I, but then the stars are fitted for such as watch, and the stars are high; and watching them will be bound to give the upward look. I count myself more rich in walking in dew-damp grasses on the porches of the night than owning an auto driveway of cement. The spring under the foot is like wearing slippers of moss; and a body becomes blood kinsman of the forest and stream.

Did I get anything? When the "morn was dew-pearled," when the boat wound in and out loiteringly as the stream, when the vision of the world's countenance was changed by the sun-burst of the morning and the song-burst of the birds, when I was going nowhere in particular nor for anything in particular, when a hidden bird on a leaning tree was speaking with the faintest voice, which resembled nothing so much as a silver hammer driving a silver nail to hang a dew-drop on, and another bird volleyed with the small artillery of "switchets, switchets, switchets," and an oriole plunked his syllables like a lot of marbles thrown in the water and some children were cramming a boat-full of hurricanes of voices and blasts of laughter and "Ouches" and "Oh, don'ts," and "Quit its" and wrigglings like a squirm of fish-worms on a dozen hooks—"Did I get anything?"

I shall be angry ere I am aware. I always get something, always get plenty. I caught no fish, certainly not, but fun and laughter and free merry-making and talking back to the children and the birds and rowing the boat putteringly, and dawdling with the oars and gazing lingeringly on the vistas of wide water afar and hearing far off a curlew's call, and seeing a rail lift its clumsy flight of mellow chestnut body and wings, or "freezing" along the stream to fool me, I remaining unfooled; and after dallying a while I will row out on the great water and beach my boat, and take cheery breakfast with my sweet family, for which the good God be thanked.

And did I get anything? Will that plebeian question never grow mannerly and subside into reputable silence? Those always get something who go out with God for soul's delight. All days are days of the lading of those argosies, very opulent, which have voyaged beyond the seashores of the world and have had in their tattered sails the winds which blow from far back behind all stars: and the sails are freighted with odors blown from "the forget-me-nots of the angels."

XI

CON AMORE

Some old Latin phrases cling like the fragrance of a pressed rose which the fingers of love plucked long since and other hands laid in the leaves of a precious book, grown much more precious because of the rose having its hiding place there these misty years and the fingers of love which plucked and gave the flower, long since crumbled into dust from which her plucking saved the rose. Mainly I would wade in the surge of our English speech as I would in the surf of the blue ocean when the wind drives the water shoreward rejoicingly. To see how foreign words and phrases, especially from contemporaneous languages, have all but vanished from our vernacular, is heartening to one who conceives the English-American speech to be the ruddiest, ruggedest tongue ever framed for the expression of universal thought. We can sit under our own language shadow, and rest content. In myself I find the disposition to use a foreign phrase all but vanished. I should prefer "between us" to "inter nos" or "safe ground" to "terra firma" and "very privately" to "sub rosa."

Of course in all our thought-moods there are traces of sweet irrationality. It is better so. That will be no happy day when we can con aloud our

reasons and count them like dried prunes. While we remain a mystery to ourselves we are happy folks. In the interest of the eternal vitalities we must have bursts of unlooked-for glory on us like an evening cloud. Lest we be ossified we must not entirely be classified. So, why a body should slur a thousand phrases fetched from a venerable antiquity and sown to poetry and hallowed by the handling of eloquent voices grown silent, long, long ago, and fondly retain some other flower grown in the same old-fashioned garden, is quite beyond anybody to explain. Better so. It needs no explanation. It is a wild sprangle of vine throwing out tendrils venturesomely but beautifully. So do I fondly retain the old Latin phrase "con amore." "Out of Love"—the doing things not because we are goaded thereto but vagrantly, like a wandering water. That is con amore. We want to. That is con amore.

We must do most things. Washing face and feet never arose out of a boy's disposition. This sprouts up through the scoriæ of his indisposition. Dirt is a boy's natural element. Fond mothers who demur at such a slur upon their lads must recall they themselves never have been boys. Being a boy initiates into some Eleusinian mysteries which even all the intuition of the woman mind cannot attain unto. This is not that the boy is brainy, it is that he is a boy. A boy takes to water. So does a frog; but in neither instance are we to infer it is for purposes of cleanliness. It

is for purpose of wetness. When a boy holds up two fingers by way of attesting that the water is good and should be indulged in and that the party of the second part should hurry up and come on and in, he is not expressing his judgment that this is his washday and that he greatly rejoices in the prospect of being in a cleansed state like his mother's Monday clothes. Verily, no. The remotest thing from the brain of Boyville is cleaning up. The "swimmin' hole" is scarcely a cleansing fount. It is too shallow, too dirty, too crowded with boys. A bath tub with crystal water does not entice the boy. The snowy bath tub and equally snowy towel along with the soap certified to float and be the delight of the little fairie, inhibits the boy. Not that he knows about "inhibits." He always is doing more things than he knows. Words never yet were a boy's strong point. Not words or their meaning or their spelling can be said to fascinate a boy. Washing his feet is in the same category, to wit, in the category of things society demands but which a boy abominates. Some things go by compulsion. Cleaning up is one of the boy's compulsions and revoltings.

The "swimmin' hole," not to be lured out of the path across the pasture which leads to that sociable but unhygienic spot, is a tribute to a boy's sense of frolic, of camaraderie, of acrobatics, of "You dasn't and I dast," but never to a sense of cleaning up. To be brief and accurate, having

this long time been a boy, with a boy washing is a concession to the Dagon of respectability and community notion of cleanliness, and is done under the rod—so to feel—while swimmin' is done "con amore." He does it as he "hollers," spontaneously, sporadically, delightedly. For swimmin' no day has been discovered long enough. Night is always in a hurry, an unnecessary and indefensible hurry, to boys in the swimmin' hole. The run, the yell, the splash, the dive, the holding up the hands to give illusory certificate of so deep, the holding of dirty freckled nose with dirty freckled fingers by way of giving wary premonition of the dive—all these things are done not out of sense of fitness, obligation, duty, high resolve, nor disposition toward cleanliness, but just for fun, for the everlasting love of it and the everlasting fun of it. Con amore.

To all such as ever have been boys I can by no lucubration nor quotations from poets give the expression of con amore so vividly and accurately as by the swimmin'-hole illustration.

The doing things out of love for them as a frog sings through the night is a fine work in a fine life. We smart as with sunburn caught in water, under the eternal, "Now I must get to work." We are hounded. All kinds of curs bark at our heels and bite them, for our feet are bare. Was that what our placid friend, William Wordsworth, was debating inside his singular head when he said, "The world is too much with us"? I think

it was. Too many things take us in hand and bring us to book. We get a hid sense of slavery. We demur in the heart. And that is a real injury to character. What we demur at with the lips may or may not be injurious, though too much indulgence in the vocabulary of complaint is deleterious. That soaks in. The mood of complaint in the heart soaks out. That is worse. To set volcanoes in the soul may or may not end in eruption, but necessarily will give a continuous heat, which is scarcely necessary considering how hot weather grows every summer. We need interior refrigerative processes, not so much to refrigerate as to gently cool, so the mosses may grow green on the north side of the tree and the fern may be ready to stoop to the dew drops which cluster on it in the night. We need a north side furnished for our souls where the lichens may gather on the boles of the forest trees and where shadows may be had at summer noons.

We chafe under the gradual resentment of "I've got to." We are more than irritated by the sweaty hands of compulsion lying heavy on our naked shoulders. We watch the swallows making fun of the sky and want to be swallows just because they seem to be gadding about obeying nobody. Doing nothing to the tune of some invisible and inaudible band playing "It's Fun to be Alive," we not seeing that the swallows are all out not didoing with the sky, as appears, but working for their board. They are all out after

bugs. So are we. They set their industry to such a tumultuous tune, such a jocular irrationality, as that what they are at seems all sport and no work. Indeed, after having on many a day watched many a swallow by evening on church chimney, where they fly and fly with widening and then narrowing circles to get at last with a wild dash into their chimney home, and on many days drenched with sunshine over glimmering waters under the blue sky, the rippling waters, and the swaying flags tawn-green by the stream and the somnolent grasses scarce wakened by the wind while the swallows darted low against the stream or high against the azure, or on rare moments when in a spirit of autumnal soliloquy a multitude of these airy vagrants of the air sat like people at a preaching—I, having watched these witching, willowy folk of the sky so many years in so many moods, am yet not able to do other than speculate whether they think they are working for a living or are out fooling around. But we men seem to ourselves like men marching in a huge crushing army where we cannot step out of the ranks for a moment's space to drink by any wayside spring or kiss our little child who peers at us from the dusty march-edge. March we must.

Nor is this attitude altogether mythical. Many things—well, put it broadly—most things are compulsion. We must eat, and clean up, and pay our bills. Not gluttony nor cleanliness nor

honesty sets us at these several tasks. To get on decently we are compelled to do them. We must get up, we must move on, we must play ball. Thanks to the good God, who himself works more than all of us, our work is both remunerative and pleasant to us. However, were it neither, we should be compelled to it by the compulsion of life—work on the rock pile or the work farm. We must breathe or die. We are in the vortex of compulsion.

All the more are we needing some thing or things which we do for fun—con amore. To do a thing because I want to do it and don't have to. Kissing one's wife is to be classified here. It is downright fun. She may not want you to, but you know your business, hence the bussing proceeds. You raise vegetables out of need of edibles; you raise flowers con amore. You like to see four o'clocks a-sleeping in the day to waken at the approach of evening, and morning glories awake of mornings and fast asleep till the morning comes again. You like petunias with their gentle fragrance, and hollyhocks, and roses. You tuck your baby under your arm or hoist him to your shoulder not as a paid nurse but as a man at fun.

The funs of life are worth studying. The auto is a part of the fun of strong men. Costly or not, it is quite worth while, for working America has played altogether too little. I love to see hard-worked men taking a sober spree with wife and child in a motor cheap or dear. I am never so en-

grossed with whether they can afford it. They can't afford not to have fun. They ought to afford to have fun. Con amore pumping a tire or lying on your back under the car—the woman or women sitting by the road and the car and the man giving gratuitous advice to all three—this is life at the fun. "Running the car from the back seat" has already passed into a mature proverb in a jiffy. Women do not perform this service out of duty but con amore. It is whispered by some of their own sex that they like to. The like ends there. The man would omit that part of the fun; men, however, are known to be peculiar. No strong man, no man who does things in business, have I encountered who did not love to lay powerful hands upon the wheel and feel the might of the engine respond to his control or to whom the purr of the engine, like a cat being petted, did not come like the voice of lutes. He likes to do it. He runs the car con amore. "Rather than eat" was the laconic saying of this kind of a man. I loved to hear him say it. I looked at the strong face, the steady eyes, his lines of business care, and then the care-lift like a lifted cloud which discloses the rising sun. This I saw and was glad, for his hours were long, his cares were many, his burdens persistent, his heart often heavy. Here's a lift to his load, a con amore stretch of road where the running is good and no traffic policeman is near to gauge the speed, wherefore away and a song transfused with laughter.

The fads men and women love, the collecting things, are con amore marks. For years I have read catalogues of collectors because in china, marquetry and buhl, coins, stamps, autographs, butterflies, old swords, firearms, flowers—no matter what—in them I found winsome signs. Though I knew not the person I liked him. He had days off. His crotchet was humorous, not pathetic. When I hear about a collector his gravitation tugs at my planet till I am swung from my course.

One man I know collects watches. They do not go. They had gone. He had them, littles and bigs in abundant store, and I loved to watch him watch them. He could run on about them in a topsy-turvy talk which chimed like an old clock on the stair.

Another had violins. He did not play them which rendered his fad harmless. It was expensive, like collecting orchids (which some moneyed folk do). What a sweet con amore it was collecting mute music, which, long hushed, waited only for the mystic touch. He might by some lovely chance come upon a Strad, or some dreamy-eyed master from Cremona. I never see some violins in some dusty window where some stooped violin maker plies his trade, feeling at the throat for melody, without the tang of a musician in my hesitation. 'Tis good to love things just for love of things, to forget cash, the "will it pay," and all that grinding but necessary vocabulary of making a living.

Those piscatorial folk, those followers of Saint Peter (in lying) and Ike Walton, who wrote of the gentility, docility, gentleness, and sweet humanity of impaling worms and fishes, and because neither could speak thought he did God a service, such have I seen gathering a library of fishing books of every age and nature. Just so fishing was on the title, all was well. Though I fish not, I have a steady love for all those lovers of loitering water or hurrying trout stream or evening-shadowed lake, or dimming river at the morning's murk. One lover of fishing I know. He is not young in years. He is wistfully young in heart. He would stand and cast and cast and cast while his boat would take him a free ride as he did so. He would sit in the burning sun a long day and troll. He would take a delight bright as the flash of sunlight through an angry cloud, in the tug and the fuss and the fight and the struggle of a fish against a man, and tired as if he had been on long soldier march (whereof he knew much by long-past battles) he would march home of the evening smiling like a kid of fifteen and sleep the night through with a smile on his dear face, and one who loved him much ventured the hope one day, that in heaven God might have some sweet water for this happy fisherman to dawdle by and dream over and fish in where endless sunlight gave a day long enough for such a jocund fisherman to have his fun through.

Another lad, of eighty when I knew him, who

when he was waiting to die would gather about him his hooks and lines and flies and reels and, with feeble though loving fingers, would fumble among what the undreaming would have thought rubbish, but what God counted hidden laughter. And when I called one day he blew in my face the memory of happy summers with hook and line and laughing loitering by many a laughing water and showed me mementoes of sunny summers and unforgotten streams and pine shadows on the tossing plunges of riotous rapids hurrying from the drifts of hidden snows. With a fluttering voice like a wounded thing he would rehearse how this caught such and this other such, and so on, lingeringly and laughingly, his eyes all the time like glint of running waters, while his voice hung on some incident like a singer's on some beloved note, and at the last he gave me a line he himself had braided from horsehair (an art, he said, which would die with him), and as he chuckled over years of summer days and innumerable fishings I could see the gentle Fisherman whose other name is Christ standing behind the lad-man and smiling brightly, and hear him saying softly, like a caress, "I will make you fishers"; and as in parting I prayed that when this dear fisherman stood on the bank of that wild water where no fisherman casts a line the good Christ would make a way for him across that stormy waste into that tender sunrise where the wide river runs, called by the angels The River of God; and the sweet old fisher-

man took my hand at the prayer end and kissed it. Nor have I seen him since he met Christ at the crossing and crossed with him.

Con amore—haunting store windows to catch the gleam of precious stones. Con amore—standing with hands behind him clasped in a nervous clasping and unclasping in whispered gladness watching the pictures in the art windows. Con amore—childless women watching with hungry eyes children and babies in a park where babies are more numerous than flowers, watching with hungry, feasting eyes, covetous, beautiful mother-woman eyes, and wanting them all. One of these sweet con-amorists I know who adopted three trivial orphans of one mother because she could not bear to see them separated. Sweet collector of motherless babes, thy God sees thee through his tears what time thou doest such sweet deeds, for so doth his well-beloved Son.

Con amore—and a man I know whose means are ample collects old watch seals and crests on sardonyx, and he has permitted my right hand to stumble around in a bag which contained two thousand seals (he stood close, and I thank him for having delivered me from temptation). Con amore—and my friend's wall is hung with etchings, etchings, etchings, more etchings. How his dear eyes make merry like a yuletide when he goes from one to one and like a man talking to himself in quiet sleep rehearses how this was found here and this there, and how he came upon that,

until it is like hearing some one you love play softly on an organ in the twilight that neighbors on the dark.

Con amore—and one friend has a collection of sunsets in his soul. They are all framed in memory. He has collected them from Spitzbergen to the South Sea. He has seen them on headland and prairie. He has torn them out, a leaf from the picture book of the years, and has hung them in his soul's art gallery. He says he will take them with him to heaven and show them to God; and I think he will.

Con amore—there is where the book lovers gather and smell of ancient pages as if they smelt of mignonette, and finger rare bindings, or grow jubilant over first editions and hunt for some certain book which defies them, or grow garrulous over some beautiful page of manuscript the scribe whereof has been fast asleep in some meek monastery so long that the writing desk has forgotten that ever he wrote there. Such folks fondle books as curls on a child's topsy-turvy head. What a genial insanity is on these book collectors, these custodians of the world's yesterdays of knowledge and of dreams! I love them all.

These con-amorists—I know them all without introduction. They constitute an imperishable company. Little things delight them as they do idiots and children. Smiles are lambent on their looks like music on hidden water. They can

foreignize their souls quicker than a dove can take its flight. They forget where they are, how tired or how old, their fever is put out and all their days become one shining yesterday and all yesterdays become to-morrows. These are the quiet dwellers in the Con Amore Land.

And without intent all of us go wandering into Con Amore Land. The mothers have found it with their babes. The men have found it with their sweethearts and their wives. Maidens and matrons have found it with their beloveds. In that dear land where Love hath empery all things move effortlessly like the weaving of a daydawn. All things Love does she does for love. Her hands are hard with toiling, often bleeding and dying at the task, yet are unwearied as an angel's wings. How sweet it is to affirm that out of love Life's larger issues are all shaped. "My heart aches so," said a woman to me the other day, "because four children I took to rear because they were motherless and fatherless are all gone from me. When can I ease my pain?"

"They were burdens," I said, "these many, many years, and you had children of your own, and now you may rest a little of an afternoon."

I said it not as thinking so, but by way of provoking her heart and lips to speak poetry. And they did, for she was swift to reply: "They were no trouble. All my trouble is that they are gone."

And I wist not a woman spake, but thought an angel sang.

CON AMORE

Out of love—sheer con amore—is our love to God. A freshet wide-flowing, mad-musicked, swift running is the love we know to God. Not out of duty but out of love is the south land of Eternity contrived. We should love God. Yet not here lies the ineffable music of Redemption. We love to love Him. As the loving mother and father, so loving God is no compulsion, but we spring to it as the birds spring to dawn. We spring to it as the water lifts to its rainbow. We spring to it as lips to their kiss. We spring to it as the wild sea to its melody. We spring to it as the woman to the long-absent breast of her soldier husband. We spring on it as the Resurrection to the Voice of God.

Con amore. We love the Lord not as told to, not as duty-bound to, but as those nigh spent in the sea-wrath are caught to a strong man's heart and when they thought to lie in the breast of Death are landed on the Heart of Life.

Out of love men and women long since clad themselves in martyr robes and washed their hands and face in fire nor thought themselves martyrs, but only favored of the Lord to witness so. Out of love!

Out of love I battle by the cross and take God to my heart as the night does the dew.

Con amore, O Christ! Con amore!

XII

"AND TO ALL POINTS BEYOND"

A RAILROAD station has not been set down among the habitations of poetry. Search all the guidebooks which chronicle the places of solace in the Land of Dreams and never a finger will point to a railway depot. I cannot find it in my heart to blame them. Railroads are not evident poetries. They are comfortable methods of transportation and represent the highest type of utility. For railroad ties and railroad rolling-stock and steadfast purpose to serve the race I cherish a respect that cannot be set down in words. The great Turner has a great picture to figure transportation, which is the nearest station to poetry at which a railroad train has ever arrived. But, then, Turner could idealize anything. He was an infinite idealization and certainly an infinite idealizer. Himself was utility touched with the infinite.

It grieves my spirit more than I can say to recall how, whatever the nobility of structure of a depot, it has no æsthetic thrill for the soul. The Pennsylvania Station in New York city is in many regards an adventure in architecture incomparable on this continent. Its massive pillars, its ex-

traordinary concourse, its splendid roominess, its compulsion of nature, its conquest of the Hudson River, its taking calm control of all comforts for the use of travelers, challenges even the stupid to admiration. It is worth going round the world to see and is more worthy than all pyramids and coliseums. Yet do the sphinx and the pyramids and the coliseum still stand in the midst of the landscape of human wonder, while this place of transit is unacclaimed by even imaginative travelers.

The reason indubitably is that utility is one thing and poetry is another thing. They scarcely mix, at least not in architecture. Utility has its laurels It wears a crown of gold. Poetry has its coronet. It is the withering petals of wild flowers, yet outlasts all crowns of gold. You cannot have everything. The railroad builder does a stupendous work. He is an achiever all but unapproachable. It is not to be thought that he should write sonorous sentences outsounding stormy seas, as Milton has done in prose and poetry. There are realms and realms. It would be scarcely fair to have one man lord it over all realms. Only the sun does that. Commerce is one name; poetry is another. They must not make faces at one another. That is not polite. "He hath his work, I mine," reads the high poem "Ulysses"; and the verdict is ultimate.

And the railroad station is not written down in the Forest of Arden nor in the Islands of Hes-

perides nor in that Indian Summer Land of Utopia. Nevertheless, it must not murmur but rest content, seeing it has had its abundant service and may well be satisfied.

Notwithstanding!

We must ever keep that word of our human dictionary lying close at hand like a dictionary when we spell correctly. At times least expected we shall be called upon to use it. The reason is the unreasonableness of life. Life is a radiant thing whether at a railroad station or a lover's tryst. Effulgence is apt to put in an appearance on any beclouded day. A rush of rapture may be looked for solely because there is somewhere a sun. Whatever the place or shadow, life is apt to spread wings and utter song. A stable is not quite a house of poetry, yet we know how the Poet of Poets was born there among the soft-breathed cattle. Since which event we are wistful to keep our "Notwithstanding" close at hand like a keepsake from one we greatly loved and lost. We may need to kiss it or weep over it smilingly any moment. There are no set moments for Life's music to break into carols.

So then, *notwithstanding*, a railway station is not a flower bed where poetry is set to break into sudden and blissful bloom, it sometimes does break into blossom there. When the card of announcement of time for trains to depart, where the name of the railroad and the names of the places of considerable importance are set down,

after a recitation of many names you may sometimes read, "And to all points beyond."

I recall the first time that announcement caught my eyes, how it lifted me into ecstasy. A railway station may not be a fit place for ecstasy, as the reader may be mentally suggesting, and I will not be disputatious. My points of ecstasy are not all charted. They come like an unlooked-for loveliness on a hidden river. In a railroad station when a boy at the front where battle spills its tides of death, was reported killed but was not, and you see the meeting of the soldier lad and father and mother when the soldier lad comes home wounded, pale, prison-worn, and in the railroad station their glory of reunion sweeps over them like an illustrious sunup; then such as witness the scene know that poetry has never had a loftier chariot in which to ride than the crowded, unpoetic depot.

That day and many a recurring day when that legend of the road smiled out at me like a wild flower in the spring woods, I have wandered through crushing throngs as if I wandered through wide fields sown to asphodels and amaranths. I forgot surly and wearying journeys and throngs of sweaty passengers getting on the train and off, and I climb invisible Alps and wander beside new rivers not named in any earth geography and adventure into far countries where no traveler has adventured. The railroad card has gripped my hand till the bones in the fingers crack and the

fingers ache and bleed and I am clutched with a vast desire, to wit, the tug of the Infinite.

"And to all points beyond." That is in actuality where any man's real journey begins. That is his station. He is en route "To all points beyond." Anybody can go somewhere: only unusual folk can go everywhere. Where the journey stops is really where the journey begins.

If one were to select a schoolroom for thought, would it be a depot? Hardly. Yet here it is. A thought belted like a knight for far adventure. "And to all points beyond." Should a railroad be farther going than the soul of woman and of man? Shall a railroad have far points along its run and man remain barely a local incident? To suggest it is a parody on all high things and holy, whereas life is not parody; life is poetry.

Soul is headed "To all points beyond." Life is on a very long quest. There is where all materialized theologies are bankrupts. They have no provision for the quest of the soul back of visible horizons, nor for it to touch at "all points beyond." They are glib and chipper about nearby points. They can recite like a little child its Mother Goose rhymes, the names of all the little towns, the places where starch is made or glue or chocolate bars or window screens or window glass, the towns where the roundhouses are and the division points on the road, the funny little stations of "much-ado about nothing"; but the stately places, the headlands where the golden

glory burns radiant like autumn, the trifling hamlet where some great soul waked or slept, the farmstead where some sweet woman died of unrequited love and wore a pathway like an angel's street to some dear grave where her tears of hope and heartache watered the grave, the town where grows the trunk called Struggle, the Hill called Hope, and the Vineyard where grow the Eshcol grapes and where the great Vinegrower tramped out the grapes of wrath alone, the town called Mansoul, or the mountains named Delectable, or the fair prospect the angels call The Land of Beulah—those dear places of longing and remembrance and holy hope the guides for travelers know nothing of. They say with self-satisfied voice, "These are not set down on our timecard, which is revised to date, quite modern, with each smallest new place set down." They call harshly like a train caller in a roomy station, stridently, the puny places on the puny timecard, but have no "points beyond." The little car lines that run through a sugar plantation or to a nearby lumber camp or to a summer merry-go-round are not the railways for the soul. The soul must take long trips and arduous. The martyrs tramped long roads with bleeding feet and bleeding lips, yet singing feet and singing lips. The short road is ineffectual. For turtles it may suffice but not for birds of passage or for far sailing ships. The lapping of water on the strand has a faraway voice, a yearning look and mood: "Outward" is

what it whispers. The voices of aspiration are seldom clangorous. They are half-hushed silences. They do not cry in the market places, having a subduedness like falling shadows. There is a secrecy in all large matters. So is it that the night to many has a manlier ministry than the day. It has rooms of silence, mystery, unfolding. They are as the winter when all seeds are silent in the frozen ground with never an intimation of what sort the seed may be or even that it is. No wisest wisdom can tell when or where spring flowers shall in glad spring spring up. Mystery puts finger across its lips. No secret is told. All wonder has silences more musical than music.

These know-alls of the road of life use megaphones too much. Megaphones are for the sightseeing car through city ways. They are not fitted for the solemn solitudes where the mountains stay and where the pines give forth at one breath odors and music. There is no sound of machinery when the lilies weave their garments of starlight or of snow; and the thorns of the crown of thorns were not shaped on an anvil to the hammer's voice. These noisy pointers of travelers to no-where-much, methinks they do profess too much. Their voice is still high, vociferous, strident, raucous, but their vocabulary is limited. They have not acquired the words of the journey. They are like the little child who can tell you who lives next door but who has no knowledge of the town where Shakespeare was born and died nor the field

where Robbie Burns plowed up the mouse and the daisy. Shall a railroad timecard know more than a guide for man? Why should the man who knows so little be so severe with the man who knows so much? Why should the man who has never met God be so smilingly superior to the man who has heard God talk to him, who has God's secret hidden in his heart? Why should the little village be ironic with the metropolis? This is worthy inquiry. I protest, ignorance must not swagger so, nor the little man play so many tunes on his penny trumpet. Men of my generation have been so absolutely sure in telling how things were not and what themselves did not know, meantime many a woman kissing her babe to sleep and praying with her could have tutored them in a salutary theology filled with whispered and sung halleluiahs. Such souls have "points beyond" arranged for on their chosen journey. There is no break in the voice of the know-all, no choke in his throat. Huxley spent his last days in caring for flowers. And is that all? Could he find no sweeter gardening? I have known bent men and gray and young men in the morning of their years, but called to die; these have I known to grow heaven's lilies and a quiet heart and a settled trust and a radiant life which outshone rainbows and white suns.

So many roads I encounter as I wander on unaccustomed ways which lead in to a farmhouse, and there they end. The roads so many minds

travel lead to the farmhouse named Death and into a narrow valley with no way out. Shall we trust and choose for road makers those who build a road to a farmhouse, or were it better in wiser wisdom to employ for road-makers those spirits which build the road "To all points beyond"? across the continent, into all marts, beside all seas, to all high mountains of vision, through every lovely valley where singing streams fill the way with music?

Ofttimes in my loiterings on summer streams my boat dawdles because my hands use the oars idly as not designing to hasten but to enjoy and see things in sky and stream and river edge, and, so loitering, I have seen climbing slowly to the surface of the water a misbegotten thing meant for the mud of the bottom of the stream and not at all for the shining surface where the sweet winds dream and the sunlight makes glory. What impels the crawling thing of the underworld to adventure so? Why stayed it not where it was born an ugly cannibal to prey on water-worms and dash about in its muddy depths at home in the slime and the ooze? To me there is something inexpressibly pathetic and at the same time infinitely glad and heroic in this slimy advent at the surface of the summer stream. It had never been here before. Down in the roily depths its life had passed in worm contentment, its only eagerness being the eagerness of hunger, a thing of the slime and well content till now, when a new hunger

togged at its dim life, it grew restless as running water. The ooze was no longer its paradise. Its companionship with shadow and mud no longer gave it comfort. It had never risen. At the bottom of the stream was its home, sweet home. What knew it of any upward? It had no sky nor needed it. Slime begotten, it had slime happiness. And now. What is a "now" to a worm wriggling in the mire? It has no now nor then. But *now*—the worm wants upward. It cranes its poor neck, lifts its poor, dull head a touch above the ooze. It eels a blind way to the ladder of a reed rooted in the mud which has been its only landscape—mud all. The worm feet begin the slow ascent out of its life-time home, away from its poor but accustomed ways, hungrily climbing to where it has never been and to what it knows not of, and to light and sky which it has not dreamed of, to sunshine glorious as joy. It climbs, climbs, tiredly, achingly, for a fatigue and a pain have invaded the wriggling climbing body, climbing dizzyingly, for a strange drunkenness is on it, climbs tiredly, seeing it has never climbed before, and its dull feet linger on the shaking stair of the reed pushed to and fro by the blowing wind whereof the aspirant has no knowledge, howbeit, the worm climbs, climbs on and up. It is a long, grim journey for a worm and accustomed to no climbing. The beyond has gotten into its poor slime body. Why should a worm want to leave its worm home? There it has been happy, unaspiring.

And *now*, Ah, that *now* keeps reappearing. It has come into the worm's vocabulary. *Now*. The poor, dogged thing keeps on. Fire is in its muddy feet, and they toil on whither they had never been. A sublime persistency is on this trivial and despised thing. It never would have coveted nor consented to such a trip before, but on now, tugged at by it knows not what, it climbs out of the ooze, up the stalk, up to the surface of the stream, above the surface of the stream. Its slow, slimy full length at last trembles and pauses. It surely will return. It has no business here. All is new and strange. The light worries it. The wind makes it shiver, and all things make it afraid. No mud, only sky and sunlight. No water, but sky. Turn, poor dull worm, make no excuse. You have had your escapade and can tell your journey to your family and friends, hasten back home. No, the dull worm does not return. It is out of its old element, all it knew or guessed, yet clings tenaciously to its stairway of ascent, clings with blind tenacity while the reed rocks and the winds hurry and the sunlight blinds. Poor, grim, glorious traveler! Poor, grim, glorious soldier! I hail thee for the hero that thou art.

Then a dizziness comes on and over this poor creature of anabasis; pains make it blind, yet it does not turn back, does not head downward into its old abyss, does not seek its elemental darkness, but barely clings, clings palpitatingly while a whirlwind of pain shakes the poor and shabby

house the worm has hitherto dwelt in gladly until, and *now*—O wonder!—the worn feet still cling pitifully, frightenedly, heroically to the reed, while from the worm body immerges a thing of light, a rainbow luster, a creature of wings and gossamer, a body of glancing lights, a creature not of mud and ooze provided for the sky; and the body it had is left a husk which still clings on the wind-blown reed ladder of the reed, and the dragon fly when its wings are dried plumes flight into an element it never knew and wings "To points beyond." It has the sky, the glancing river, the swaying rushes, the forests rimming the river, the glory of the sun. Dragon fly it is called, named, and known—not the river worm. It is named after its flight "fly." That is its life and its joy. It flies. Wings have taken the place of feet. Feet it has but only for temporary alighting. So long it had its feet only that now it scarcely lights. Wings—all wings. It lights only for the laughter of renewed flight.

When such an apocalypse is open to us, may not a wee worm teach man the lesson of the sky? A poor worm, sworn brother of the mud, left the mud and found a road to "points beyond."

I confess the sight of this deserted husk clinging to the rush along the stream makes me weep like a motherless baby. I cannot see it often enough to quench the wonder of it. I had nearly said the miracle of it. For no miracle set down to the hands of the Son of God when he was barefoot

here on our open road was quite as wondrous as this worm aspiring to the sky and wings. "To points beyond" seems not such an extravagant formula after this. A man should have as good a chance as a worm, think you? and as high a chance?— No change of the mortal body to an immortal body whereof the Christ gave credential was equal in prodigy to this worm apocalypse. It had no light, no sky, no wings, nor needed them, nor wanted them, then came to possess them all. And shall not the good God who put the passion for the sky and wings into the shambling worm give passion to man for a better world where wings shall take the place of tired feet and fretlessness shall preempt the place of care?

I protest the rationalist and the materialist should go to school to the worm, which could teach them immeasurable diameters more than they have set down in their dull eyeless philosophy. Man is a chrysalis and shall emerge; death is a dizziness which comes over the body, the brain, when making transit from mortality to immortality. There is a change of azures; there is the espousal of the infinite; for this mortal shall put on immortality, and we shall be *changed*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and God shall give a body as it shall please him. Cannot the dragon fly talk that talk after what has happened to him? I wot he could. Only, it remains for a redeemed man to say it in whose life abides the luxury of immortality.

Such as make light of this radiant immortality, this change from little to large, from less to more, from under to upper, from a culdesac of death to the open roadway of immortality, to "All points beyond," turn out to be grim disciples of the mud and the worm could teach them beyond all they know and become their apostle. They trumpet so loudly they should be taught a gospel to proclaim. "A little child shall lead them" was a somewhat whimsical word long ago uttered to those super-wise who knew so little. But now the irony is that a water worm shall be competent to lead these. If the water worm's groping be prophetic of its place in the azure, how shall we explain the restless human soul save by its open sky access "to all points beyond"?

A daring aviator was shot down on the battle front not so long ago, and when they wrote of him after his death, in a tone of hushed wonder, they declared, "His home was in the sky, and he only lived to fly." That swift biography of a brave spirit, told by men who gave no heed to the vast poetry of what they set down, has drowned my heart in trumpet triumph time after time. "His home was in the sky, and he only lived to fly." Ah radiant vagrant of the upper spaces, shall I not learn of thee where I belong? Shall I for whom all points beyond are the sure hidings of my life be satisfied to let earth domineer over me, and stay a citizen where I am meant only to stay a day and a night, or shall

"I pitch my tent like the Arabs
And as silently steal away"?

I who am girded and goaded for immortality?

A worm must not transcend a man in hunger. Man must not be eyeless like an owl when his hand is tugged at by the nail-pierced Hand of Immortality.

Hear this passage from an old poem writ in an illuminated missal:

"There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. . . . And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. . . . For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." And with that voice of trumpets my soul is in accord. I know it from my need. I know it from those radiant dissatisfactions which urge me into clamorous surgings after those things I have not yet secured and the God whom I shall see. The dragon fly must not shame me. The flying man of battle in the skies must not point brave finger at me in scorn.

I will consult my soul when it is hushed in the presence of its passion for aspiration and for sunrise and for starting to all points beyond. I will consult the Passion of the great spirits of the world, who knew time was not their port but their port was eternity. I will consult the Great Intruder who came from heaven to tell to earthly

souls the bewildering company to which they were kinsfolk, and I will hear Him say, "Knowing that he came forth from the Father and that he must retire to the Father," and "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye"—

"And to all points beyond."

XIII

SOME FRIENDS OF MINE IN PARADISE

To those whose profoundest life is hid with Christ in God, friendship becomes a plain matter of eternity. To such, loving folks is beginning a love which knows no ending. It is this which sets Christian friendship quite apart from that of Cicero, who deemed himself connoisseur in friendship and luxuriated in it. Always to me in reading those Ciceronian lucubrations there seems a touch of theatricality as if he were rehearsing a play with his face before a glass to see if he had tears at the opportune juncture and whether his pose were suitable and affecting to the audience. I do not feel him deep and tidal in his affection. In this judgment I may wrong him though I think not. Death clangs his frozen door in his face and makes him pale. His friends could not last long. They parted from him at the grave. "Finis" is written with ink of blood and tears at the grave's edge. Lastingness is what Ciceronian friendship lacks.

What his friendship lacks Christian friendship has. To a Christian, death can only make faces that are more funny than ferocious. Christians do not make acquaintances: they make friends. They are to be on the long voyage together. All the hosts of friends we have known and all the

hosts of friends we shall later know are vestured in this shoreless sociability and sanctity. Nothing like it has ever been conjured up by the smiling ingenuity and imagination of all the poets. Christianity monopolizes that surprising poetry. We be friends to stay friends *in gloriam sempiternam*. That puts wings of gold on our venture in friendship. We fly so very far. We feel like the doves which carry on their love-making in the sky. O, it is very wonderful! I feel the immensity of this enterprise and hear the laughter of the friendships that cannot die.

"He is dead," newspapers say. Christian hope says, "He is alive forevermore!"—and Christian hopes speak with sure veracity. 'Tis sunny weather our souls encounter when we have Jesus Christ and we be his brethren.

I am here setting down some memorabilia of my heart concerning certain friends who have dipped into the darkness of the grave for a moment as swallows into a chimney in the dark. What those brethren were when the winds of death blew boisterously, that they are. And the wild storm that seemed to blow them out has only been a favoring breath to fill their sails and blow them across the waters into their desired haven. They lived in God and they live with God. I deem it worthily worthwhile to set some of these men and women out in the glow of the firelight of the hearth of the heart to the end that we who tarry may remind ourselves of the necessary heavenliness of the place

where such souls assemble. The assemblage of such creates a heaven. Distance, mutation, fear, non-friendship could not reside where such men are permanent citizens. Here they banished shadows and they conquered fear. What heaven would be with such as these in every sunny room requires no vaticination to conceive or portray. Their presence distills heavenly aroma and sets up angelic songs. We say as we look into such faces as I here limn, "No day can seem long with such companionship."

In the morning I shall meet them—the morning of the wistful, unsetting day.

"Dear Will Reed"

Some adjectives thrust themselves on you when you are thinking of some people. They will not let you alone. They fairly tag around after you insisting that they must have their say. That word with regard to W. H. Reed I have used in the caption of this appreciation. "Dear" he was and is. He broke into your heart like soldiers into a city and once in you could not do without him. He was a lover of people, a hot lover. He was so eager to be loved and so worthy to be loved, and he was so challenging to affection. I recall when Charles B. Mitchell was pastor of Grand Avenue Church and I of Independence Avenue Church, how Brother Reed would regularly come to the Preachers' Meeting on Mondays and insist that

the greatest sermon ever preached in Grand Avenue Church had been preached the day before, and how, with eyes overflowing with tears, he would tell how many were at the altar the night before. He was loyal to his preacher and loyal to his friends, and not many men of his generation were more gifted in being loved than this blessed man, gone now to God.

He was given to talking heterodoxy. It suited his quaint turn to jar people up by saying things; and he was happy when preachers or others would turn on him and give him a theological overhauling. How he would laugh on both inside and out! But his big laugh was on the inside. I have not often known a man with deeper faith at the heart. His heterodoxy was talk deep; his orthodoxy was heart deep. I loved to hear him argue what I knew he did not believe.

I came to know him first when I was a professor in Baker University; and he was good to me and has been all these beautiful years since. For years, since the loss of his wife and son I have written him often, for as his blindness grew on him he had deepening longing for his friends. I had a long letter from him after he had arrived at Kansas City to die. He said sadly—for I had written him of some of those Kansas City people he loved as he loved the sky—"I have not been out to Kate and Kale's yet." He has not been there yet! The telegram which said he was nearing the brink came to me long delayed. I think,

however, that a letter of mine must have been in his hands nearing the last reading the dear lad did. I love to think he would walk out into the great beyond holding me in his heart.

How glad I was that his decease came in Kansas City, where his heart had been all these years. He was at home in Kansas City wherever he dwelt. He will be as at home in the City, New Jerusalem, where he now is a dweller with the singing throng.

I should like to hear him join the holy chorus. He will know the tune.

Dear Will Reed!

O Crystal Heart!

I CANNOT let my friend of many years slip away into the Delectable Land without having my written word about him. I have had many spoken words about him and shall while I stay this side the sky. He is ever somewhere in my thoughts. He was so sociable, so apt to happen in as a body walked along the road, so unobtrusively familiar, so having the resemblance of a member of the household of one's thoughts and heart that it is not possible for him to be far away from the thought when thoughts are pure and worthy so as to feel at home with them. I have not known a more charming citizen of eternity than this wholesome minister of Christ and this lover of men and women. I have grown

so used to thinking "How would that strike Naph?" that I do so now just as of yore. He has not stepped into the past tense. He was too glad a dweller in this present to himself become a part of yesterday. He must dwell in a tireless to-day. He was fond of books, but they come into his to-day to meet him. You cannot think of him staying back with Montaigne or of Montaigne having a very hard hold on his hand. He would read Montaigne to catch the flashes of that cold, shrewd, winter wind of caustic skepticism, and enjoyed it as not believing it, and laughing on out of an atmosphere where flowers could not bloom nor any fruits ripen. This friend of mine dwelt in a summerland. He was headed toward summer and meant to dwell in it whether the weather did or not. The summer winds with wheat breath on them were his winds. He could extemporize a summer if one were not present. He chuckled so readily and so contagiously. I hear him at it now. They do not chuckle in heaven? Said you so, friend? Who told you? How came you so otherwise? Mistake not otherwiseness for wisdom. They are not relatives nor even neighbors. Not chuckle in heaven? Why not? Are our finer traits to be denaturized by swimming across a brook called Death? That indeed would be a pity. We should be more human than to have such vain imaginings about immortality. I conceive immortality to be that state of soul in the which all that was best in us has its unhindered,

sunny way and what was least in us and crudest shall have been dispersed in the battle of dying. Our roomy, brotherly, brainy, beautiful selves shall have an eternal play of faculty and shall laugh out loud like a lad on a holiday. I should be loath to surmise that immortality were a colorless existence where individuality had lost its charm and the voice its recognizability. I should be broken-hearted to believe that a telephone and a phonograph should preserve the timbre of the voice and eternity lose it. Nay, what is most worth while lasts. The whimsical, like Charles Dickens characters, is a part of the extemporization of the soul which smacks of immortality. I called Naph, Pickwick. He looked like that kindly autocrat of good humor and good fellowship, and must have bought his hat in a Pickwick Shop, and Mr. Pickwick himself must have taught him how to wear the hat. I never could understand how he could balance it on his head as he did. I spoke to him about it one day, saying that bishops must be dressed a little episcopally. His reply was unepiscopal, but to the point though not to the hat. It was never just safe to tamper with Naphtali Luccock, though I liked to nag him once in a while not for his good but for my own.

"Hello, Pickwick!" sang I, and he would shuffle at his hat, hanging it jauntily on his head for a peg, give his eyeglasses a premonitory readjustment, and then his talk was up and his brain began to make sparks and shoot fireworks like a

trolley wire wheel when ice is on the wire. It was good fun and holy profit to hear that bright brain whir when his attention was taunt and when he felt the good spur of colloquial suggestion. There was fun on then. I could take pages in reminiscence of the fine badinage we had and the running of fun into the holy places of the heart; for be assured he knew how close against the heart-sob and the heart-ache was the banter and the jest. There are no remote neighborhoods to conversation when immortal life has touched the tongue and immortal life is not a thing to be looked forward to of us Christians, but a thing to indulge in while we are on the underside of the cloud and a thing to be radiant over while we look toward its sunlit consummation in eternity. It was so we two enjoyed the other life. Not so much as talking at it or heading toward it as happening into the midst of it, or coming into the edge or core of it from some postern gate of present-day talk or funny mood. We had no trouble to get into high talk. There was plenty of it in fragments anywhere we went. Along streets where the wind wailed in autumn threnody, along bright ways where woods were glad with sunlight, down back stairs of companionship with the distresses of humanity, everywhere we happened into God and man and music and laughter and tears and hope bugle-breathed. We said not, "Let us be serious." We went wandering about and we had grave edge and sea beach and storm wind and

cataract and cataclysm and the blue sky shooting out before us like a heavenly headland, and we heard not the horns of elfland faintly blowing as with Tennyson. He insisted the last time we had pictures taken at the same gallery that I spoiled *his* picture by laughing at him when the thing was happening to him. I insisted that such a suggestion was grotesque. Result, two men making exit giggling.

I should suppose that a man like Naphtali Luccock makes heaven necessary and immortality compulsory. We do not dare to let him be blown out by the wind, for he is such a dancing light. His smile was gentle like a star. There was always lamp-lighting when he came around.

I suppose the good God has never been sweeter to all of us than when he made each of us to be different. At our best we are so dissimilar. Some folks are glad there are no more folks like us. I have not known many men to compare with Naphtali Luccock in his beautiful strength of individuality.

God did a beautiful thing the day he gave Naphtali Luccock birth. He did a beautiful thing for Methodism when he turned this keen brain, heavenly-minded, courteous gentleman loose amongst us. He had no twin. He was not like himself much of the time. He was like a dewdrop in the sun, ever shining but not shining with identical glory.

How in the world he did teach mathematics I

could never guess, because you just cannot think of his being connected with mathematical angularity and sphericity. So how he could teach mathematics I never knew, but, fortunately, I never met him in those sad times. I met him in better days when he had turned his attention from angles to religion and gospeling and when he went shining around one way and another bringing God's love up against man and woman and child for Christ's sake. I met him at the time his life was at luster and at flower like a star in bloom.

I knew him very well. I journeyed with him a good deal, and I was with him many hours and in many circumstances, but I am delighted to say out loud here to-day that he never had one thought in the range of his variegated thinking that did not center in Jesus Christ the Lord.

He did not continually talk religion; he did not have to. To talk religion is the best some of us can do. We do not know how to get rid of our piety unless we talk it. He never needed to talk religion—he lived it. I have seen him sweat it out, laugh it out, jest it out, and though his voice was not very courageous at best, I have heard him sing it out, and I have seen him shine it out with all the grace and loveliness of a beautiful morning.

I have, for one, rejoiced that in the close of his life he was a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. There are a good many wise bishops,

and some of them living, but I did not know one bishop that had a sweeter, deeper, more radiant familiarity with the Methodist spirit than Naphtali Luccock. I did not know any man amongst us that knew more folks of the Methodist persuasion in the uttermost parts of the earth save Bishop John W. Hamilton only.

No man was ever more deeply loved, more sincerely and surely loved. He was admired by all such as had appreciation of fine mental gifts, of scintillant conversation, of wide and discriminating reading, of high and chaste thought. He had somehow such grace and goodness of soul that he could perceive the things at once which we were working toward. And his life was so gracious and his gospel so kind and the twinkle of his eye so captivating and engaging and where his lightning would hit nobody knew. And then when it did hit no one could remember just what did hit him.

It was so lovely to know him. One time he took sick and I did not know at what sanitarium he was, and so went traveling around and looking for him, and one morning I came slipping in on him, and there he sat up in bed with his jaundice-look and his haggard face and his cheeks falling in—a mere shadow of what he was. You remember that, at his best, he was not very beautiful. I thought I would cheer him up and said, "Well, Naph, you certainly are a spectacle."

He replied, "You did not have to come here to tell me that; I knew it before you came."

"I came from our brother bishops to remonstrate on your looks," I said.

"It does not lie with the brother bishops to adjust my looks," he replied.

We talked for a while, and when I got ready to leave I stooped over suddenly and kissed him on the forehead, and he looked up at me and said, "Well, you are good in spots."

I said, "I know it, thank you very much."

"If you see any of the boys"—he called the bishops "the boys"—"give them my love."

And now Naphtali Luccock has gone out where we cannot go and see him and we cannot lean down and kiss his forehead.

I took his hand and said, "O Naph, life is sweeter because you are here."

In that country where God lets us go when the sun goes down in our west, in that country where long shadows never darken along the fringes of nighttime, there we know that Naphtali Luccock is out looking around and seeing things and calling attention to them and remarking on them, and they are more enlightened in heaven: and I should not wonder if Naphtali Luccock is telling them how he thinks it looks and it might not be far from him to suggest some improvements; and God will not misunderstand him.

Naphtali Luccock is in the beautiful world of the saints of God. Our work is not yet finished. Our perplexities—we do not seem to know enough

to get out from under—continue and will continue until we are called home.

We are all glad this day that we knew this true man of God, for without any doubt we are all better because he was here, and to-day grief is at our heart because he is not here, but a great anthem of glad gladness is ours because we know where he stops and where he will spend the day and all the days following, and in the morning he will meet us when we walk in and he will say to us, "Welcome home."

Ah, friend of mine, Naph by name. I hear you now with your chuckle in your throat and your crystal heart at voice and your eyes with frolic in them, and in the far, fair land where you are citizen and I shall a little later be; and you will not be changed but kept. The things I loved in you shall last like music in the trees and that wasteless fragrance of your brain-heart shall distill upon the air in kindly talk and genial ways and vast delight in things eternal, then as in days past but more, and He whom we both did love shall shine up before us not mystical but like a Morning Everlasting; and, laughing aloud, we shall kneel and worship and the Christ shall bid us stand.

Albert J. Blackford

Albert J. Blackford has moved. He has lately gone from this earthly scene, and I, who was formerly his pastor when he lived in Chicago, write this word. Space does not allow of writing of this

soldier for his country and this lover of the Christ as it would be fitting to write. This I say: He was one of the sweetest, quietest Christian gentlemen I have been privileged to know in a happy lifetime given to knowing beautiful Christian men. In his last illness as he waked from his troubled sleep, he would inquire: "What station is this? What station is this?" And Christ met him and said, "This station is heaven," and Albert J. Blackford arose and went with Christ into the station for which he had been getting ready all his life.

King David

How hard are we all hit in the passing from this battle scene into the infinite peace of the beautiful man named David H. Moore! We should be glad for him. And in our larger moods we are. For his sake the beautiful peace of the city of God is desirable. But for our sakes who loved him then and love him now, his going even into transcendent peace is a shipwreck. We wanted him here. We had heard "his voice midst rolling drums" of battle until we thought him necessary to the fray. What a brave soldier he was! Ever soldier! I could but think of him so each time I saw him and heard him, not because he was everlastingly giving the warrior shout, but because he crowded to the front of things like a cavalryman, sword in hand.

I was accustomed to call him King David. It

was his fault. He was so kingly and so Davidic in his sense of music. Poetry was on him; and he was poetry. I loved to consider him as he sat in the bishops' meeting, seldom talking but always interested and alert. The last meeting of the Board of Bishops in San Diego, he came looking so thin and frail that he was like a picture of woundedness in battle. He was so frail that a seabreath might have blown him away, and when day by day at that meeting he came and sat through all the deliberations I would go to him and whisper: "King David, why don't you go to your room and rest? You are too weary and weak to be here." And he would hold my hand caressingly and say, "Dear Brother Will, I know as well as anything that I can never be in this meeting again, and I want to be with the brethren all the time." How like him that was! So faithful to friendship, so leal in his loves, so set in his devotion to the Church and the Christ. He minded me somehow of Colonel Newcome with his dear head snowy and his face seamed as cut with battling swords and his head bowed reverently at the sound of the Name. Dear Colonel David H. Moore, you and Colonel Newcome will make good company walking the fields of victory in the far land where bugles blow no more the rush to war.

The cheer of him, the hominess of him, the unlanguor of his spirit, the swift assent to duty, the gentle courage, the unostentatious mood, the win-

some smile, have they vanished from among us? Shall we meet at the General Conference and he not there? Shall we come to the next bishops' meeting and find his desk without the sweet, quiet, military figure behind it? How shall we get on? What sobs shall drown our voices as we try to say: "Has King David come yet? And why delays he?" We heard him say, "As I sit on my porch at 'The Maples' I can see my wife's grave." He will sit there no more looking wistfully at a grave. He is with her in a land where graves are never dug. How hale and triumphant the Christian faith sounds when men like "Dear King David" have stepped out into the foreign land called immortality, which is truly the only homeland on which our hearts may set store. Not looking at a beloved's grave, but looking at her face and both of them looking into the face of the Great Beloved. That is how it is.

Bishop McDowell wrote me, "I wept for all of us yesterday at David's funeral." His eyes must have been very wet. We all loved him so. While the church grows men of this soul-sort it is worth while for the church to stay; and it will.

We give thee good-morning, dear King David of the tuneful heart; and may we meet thee in thy morning afterwhiles.

The Reverend James Boicourt

This brave and true man and soldier and minister is taking his long rest in his eternal home.

When an orphan as a little child I lived with this sweet soldier-preacher for a year, and it put a music of manhood into my heart that has never silenced for a moment in all these years. He was to me at the time of his death the only earthly father I possessed, and my letters to him always began "Dear Father Boicourt" and his dear letters to me always began "Dear Willie," and, now I shall neither write him nor see him, only hold him in my heart like a star.

He was all man. To think that a little lad could be so impressed that all, all these years a Christian minister's character has stayed with him like a beatitude is a sermon on the service character can render this world. It is the great preacher. James Boicourt was in ancestry a French Huguenot driven hither by persecution; by the grace of America he was a patriot and soldier, and by the grace of God, a Methodist preacher. He lived a great and sinewy gospel. As a preacher he was wise, witty, keen in insight into things spiritual as well as men temporal, original, his words having a flavor of himself, humble but never cringing, devoted to his church and the Christian faith, given to song as a bobolink; and my remembrance as a child was to be wakened early in the morning by his singing about the house "Wrestling Jacob," and I can hear him now as I write. He has passed into the immortal minstrelsy of my heart and the heart of many another.

No mean thing or selfish thing ever peeked

around the corner of his life. He lived out in the open prairie of soul where you could see him from sky to sky.

How God has enjoyed him these earthly years, and how God enjoys him now when he lives nearer him!

I wish I might have seen that soldier of the cross march up the heavenly street when first he came to town where his Master, the Great Soldier, welcomed him into eternal life.

Saint James

It is the praise of the Christian Church that it does not need to look backward for its saints. It has them there but always has them now and here. They are the present tense of Christianity. Those Bible translators whose music was like a brook's laughter, who said that one Gospel was written by Saint Matthew, another by Saint Mark, another by Saint Luke, and a fourth by Saint John, were men who need no apologist for their sagacity. "Called to be saints" is one of those thoughts sown abroad through the New Testament which needs no revision. That is the business of Christianity as touching souls. And we do well to listen to that music, for it is choral music and has good right to abide. There were giants in some days but more assuredly there were saints in all days of nascent Christianity. We do not question that, rather vigorously and sing-

ingly affirm it. We deprecate the slowness with which so many Christians accept the doctrine of the continuity of saints. There are more now than ever there were.

And Methodism has its Saint James—Saint James Bashford. That sounds well on the lips of the church because it is accurate. That beautiful spirit has been continuously drinking of the heavenly springs for many, many years.

I shall always think of this modern saint as I saw him a little space ago at Grand Rapids where the bishops were in their semi-annual session. The big-brained Bashford was there. Nobody ever has questioned his brain being ample. He could spare some brains and have plenty left. Some of us could not. If accused of being statesman, his book on "China" would convict him. If accused of being educator, his work in Ohio Wesleyan and otherwhere would convict him. If accused of being a phenomenon in raising money for great causes, his history would convict him. If accused of being multi-related, his varied activities carried on simultaneously would convict him. If accused of having the blood of empire-builders in his veins, his work in the Orient would convict him.

All these granted, yet not so do I love to think on him as I beheld him. At noon lunch the brethren were singing "Beloved, Now Are We the Sons of God," and Saint James was not singing, but rejoicing. As the song lifted, his spirit took a triumph march. He who has been thought of for

years past as moving from speaker to speaker with his hand behind his ear so as to catch the speaker's words, was not in that attitude at the time I now recall. He sat head tilted back, lips open, eyes wide as if he were entering eternity and wishing to miss no glory, face shining like the face of a man in love, with rapture apparent on his features till my voice choked to silence as I watched him and my eyes spilled tears into my voice as I saw Saint James transfigured before me and had not been a whit surprised to have seen his garments grow white and glistening. He was not there. He was caught away in a rapture, and whether in the body or out of the body he knew not. "We are the sons of God" had hurled him out into its glory.

That was Saint James Bashford. So shall he stand in the long eternal day and making melody and with his spirit shining out like a lit lamp and the language of glory bubbling from his lips. Not silent there! There they can have the transfigured face and voice because they bear about upon them the marks of the Lord Jesus.

The Reverend Wilbur F. Sheridan, G.G.M.

With the Reverend Wilbur F. Sheridan, D.D., general secretary of the Epworth League of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist people of the entire world are acquainted. I sometimes wonder if we are given to consider what it means

to be a world Methodist, as our church has been from its birth.

You can go no place where Methodism is and reads (and Methodists are great readers), but that they will speak as familiarly about the leaders of the church as they do of their neighbors next door. Methodism is another name for world citizenship and world neighborliness and a woe will rest on any person or persons or community who attempts to reduce a world dominion to a purely local affair. Such a world church must not be provincialized, but more now than ever must be left alone to its world-wideness.

For many years the Reverend Wilbur F. Sheridan was a familiar name in church circles, and you could not name leading ministers of the denomination and soul-winners who were wise and omit that name. He was a great fisher of men; he studied the art of capturing men alive, with the bait of the sincere gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the page on which his story is recorded as a good minister of Jesus Christ; and his wife, the beloved of his heart, had part in this elect occupation. They together hunted for the lost sheep of the House of Israel. They specialized in youth. He knew how to preach with directness and access to hearts and how to live a sunny, engaging life, which seemed to men the best preaching of the gospel. I am among the number of these who sincerely questioned whether a soul-winning pastor who can hold audiences in a large

city should count it any promotion to be elected to any office, even the secretaryship of the Epworth League, with all the breadth of service possible in that position. The church has no task the equal of the pastorate, the first-hand shepherding of souls. Every man who by the Grace of God can preach should be at that holy vocation. Administrators are many: preachers who can preach are few.

I do not here dwell on the years of Dr. Sheridan's growing distinction, not because I might not, but because mine as I suppose is a larger office now. I do not underrate the service he gave the Epworth League. I suppose the Win-My-Chum motto was a stroke of Christian statesmanship which will live as long as the Epworth League lives.

I wish to particularize on a section of his preacher life which is hidden from the knowledge of the church and the Epworth League and from his brother ministers, when in my judgment he contributed the noblest chapters in his ministerial career. I have not placed D.D. after Wilbur F. Sheridan's name, but G.G.M. As D.D. is abbreviation for Doctor Divinitatis so G.G.M. is abbreviation for God's Good Man. It is the Heavenly title. It is God who conferred the degree. In the acts of some of the apostles the portrait of Barnabas is painted thus: "He was a good man, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." That is the unapproachable panegyric. It seems to us like a flute and like a flute's voice haunts us. I can

never tire of this sweet and heartening biography. God's good man differs from this world's good man by these far-going additions: "Full of faith," and "Full of the Holy Ghost." This is an addition of the infinite. They put the limitless into life, sweep it clear of mortality, and furnish it up with immortality and immortal incitements and inspirations, and serial doings of infinite life and procedure. Christianity is always thrusting the headland of life out into the infinite sea. In becoming Christian you become partaker of the Life of God and are seen to engage with him in passionate longevity.

Brother Sheridan, whose life just seemed well started, whose health was robustious, and amazingly full of energy, and was at a time when his body, which had all along been that of an athlete, seemed at its bodily best, all at once as if shot to the death by his arrow, he was bereaved of his strength by bodily collapse. I was intimate in my familiarity with his waning bodily power and with the immense increase of his soul. He was dwelling beside Lake Beautiful. There was set the only home he and his wife and children had ever owned—an unplastered summer house such as the rest of us lived in rejoicingly was this home, but the rich of the earth with their palaces in which to dwell doted on their habitation no more than this preacher and his family on their weather-boarded palace of privacy and peace and Christian domesticity. He changed his political citizenship to the State where this habi-

tation of content was situated. He went thither to vote. And here was the place like a heavenly providence and a sweet provision for him when he was hit by the arrow of the chase. Here he and his wife went as to a covert from the tempest. He experienced not a quaver of a muscle nor the bending of a sinew as his voice communicated his thought with utmost ease to any congregation when at noon that voice was silenced and speech became with him a lost art. For him, to use the scripture with which he headed the last article his own hand ever wrote, was "sunset at noon." Paralysis settled on his voice first. His speech became tottering; then it crept along the body and throat, and hands and body, and at last everything was paralyzed except his heart and his brain. In those days when all his ambitions had collapsed like a cloud blown to bits by an angry wind, Brother Sheridan when most men would have shown the seamy side of life, leaped out and up the real thing he was, God's Good Man.

Here I met them soon after the slow invasion of the disease began. Coming and going during the summertime I saw him, heard his speech while speech was not denied totally; saw him smile and rejoice in his home and his friends and his religion and his God; saw him when it was physically possible to go on his delighted-in fishing trips from which he always brought home spoils and would show them to me passing our cottage in what I

charged him with as a vainglorious spirit; saw him when he could not go fishing, but would slowly walk down to the landing (always with his sweet helpmate beside him) to see the other fishermen bring their spoils, then in the winter would see him from time to time where he dwelt always looking forward to the spring when he with the migrant birds could fly again to Beside Lake Beautiful; saw him in summer when he could not walk, but was taken by his wife, or daughter or son, in his wheel-chair, to halt on the bridge of our little river and look at the youth and children bathing (he never lost his love for the youth) or at the running river adventuring to meet the lake, as his own life was or at Lake Beautiful or at the grave blue sky and then at his wife, and always smiling. Though it made me weep, it was happy tears I shed. He never preached a sermon like the sermon of his life in these last ebbing years. This was a sublime and compelling eloquence. We all felt it, answered to it like forest trees to forest winds. I bear record that during all these disheartening weeks, months, and years, I never heard or saw him murmur. His speech thickened, then disappeared; then he spelled his thoughts out to his wife on the fingers of his slowly moving hand in the alphabet of the dumb, then the fingers grew relentless and could be moved no more, then with the slowly moving hand he pointed toward a card having the alphabet printed on it, and so spelled out his thoughts but never a glum word spelled,

nor an unsmiling look. Always a smile on his lips and a deeper smile in his eyes, and on sunny summer days he would sit wrapped up in his invalid's chair and watch the flowers grow which had been planted under his eyes, his wife being the sweet gardener.

Their home was on a roadway which the winds had shoveled out with their unintermittent blowing, not a spear of grass thrust up through that well-traveled road; and in those days of his approaching death he asked and received of his neighbors the permission to change the name of that gully of the winds to Happy Valley. So it is named, and so should it stay named while that valley stays. Oh it is beautiful! Happy Valley—and Christ sauntered down that valley as in no sort of haste, to loiter with God's Good Man and bid him bide in perfect peace, because his heart was stayed on God.

When I would blow in from my church journeys I always knew what he wanted. He wanted to know about the brethren, the churches, the church, and the jocose things of the road, the smiles touched with tears. How his eager eyes would stand alert as I would tell him about his brother ministers. He loved them just for themselves in those last days when he could see them no more. I prayed with them from time to time, his devout head bowed like the head of Colonel Newcome at prayers. When I would start away to hold a Conference he would

say, with his dumb lips speaking through his slowly moving fingers, "Give them my love." He was ever brave and unlamenting. His last day's vocabulary was free of all compiaint. His sense of humor was keen, and late in his day when the sunset was clouding at the west, and my daughter who loved him much was telling how her little lad seemed so slow in learning to talk, his eyes sparkled and he slowly spelled on the alphabet card "H-e- i-s- a- b-o-y!" Enough said.

He thought of death as a sweet adventure, but was in nothing morbid and not given to much talking about it, but smilingly looking forward to it as a caged bird to get a chance at the sky. Like Samson, Wilbur F. Sheridan slew more in death than in his life. On his birthday in a sanitarium, when his wife had celebrated the event with great laughter, which in her heart was a pond of tears, and he, glad but weary, was about to be put to bed, he spelled out on his hand to his wife, "Next birthday in heaven." And in her heart, she did not weep before him. Next birthday! Heaven is a dear land of birthdays of God's Good Man.

He could no longer walk, could no longer talk, he could no longer eat (for many months took his food through a tube). He could not move himself, and must be handled as a piece of furniture, but was always thoughtful for others, and glad and full of the singing cheer of the gospel, his mind alert, his sense of humor regnant and his

interest in the world's affairs strong as they had always been. After his morning's washing and dressing he would sit up in his chair and read the Chicago Tribune and the church papers. I wrote a letter rebuking him for being so worldly as to be reading the secular papers and his wife wrote how great was his laughter.

He was transferred from the Saint Louis Conference to the Indiana Conference at the request of those brothers, for he had begun his preaching in Indiana and had been educated in De Pauw University. This was a great glee to his spirit, as it was a beautiful thing for those preachers to do. He wanted to be buried at Greencastle, where he was educated, and beside his dearest college friend dead long years before him. The bravery, Christian fortitude, and tenderness and loyalty of his wife can never be told. I look upon this domestic episode beside Lake Beautiful in the life of this God's Good Man in transit to beside the Eternal Sea as one of the sweetest love idyls I have ever known or read. He wrote his brethren of the Indiana Conference, "I cannot eat, nor walk, nor talk, but I can love and pray!"

And now Brother Sheridan is setting up housekeeping in God's Happy Valley, where God's Good Men stay.

"No chilly wind nor poisonous breath
Can reach that blissful shore."

Happy Valley, God's Happy Valley, Brother

Sheridan a long-day smiling and no weeping, only song, and may there be pine trees growing near thy heart, and the river flowing shining near thee, and morning glories blooming which thine own hand had planted!

Robert Forbes

Robert Forbes is dead! How it grieves us all to chronicle the fact! How lost we feel, knowing he is not around any more, and will not be!

That sturdy figure not to walk in General Conference halls; that vastly individual face not to front us; that magnificent head, full of strange and often subtle thought, not to lift its dome; those lips that knew how to frame eloquence and jest and happy repartee, not to distill smiles and laughter and eloquent periods again here!

And "here" is the right word. Not here will he walk, talk, and inspire us, but *there* he is in hale health, and his eloquence has abundant range and opportunity.

I saw this Boanerges last at the Northern Minnesota Conference, to which he came a dying man —a wounded lion seeking his home place to die. His wife was with him returning from a long tour of speaking at Conferences on the Pacific Coast and the vast lands of the gospel this side; his son was summoned to his bedside to minister to him as son and physician; his brethren were in Conference assembled, but he was brought from car

to hotel and could not come to Conference, being confined to his bed all the while, and was carried to the car again to go to Duluth, so dear to him, to die. A committee from the Conference was raised to bear him love and greetings, of which committee I was one. We came to this loved, honored, and smitten brother conveying somewhat of the burden of love committed to us, it falling to my lot as spokesman to voice in few words the tender message. His smile was wan, but sweet like autumn sunlight. A bit of fun fell from his lips. He thanks the committee with a weak but happy voice. I saw him at different times, and for a moment only, for he was very weak, but left him in good hope of his rallying.

As he lived so we found him at his dying—a sturdy personality who had no lack of individuality. A tender, brusque man who loved his friends, his church, his Conference, his fellow ministers, with a wholeness and wholesomeness good to see. He and cant were no relations. His religion was not effusive, but had depth and uplift. It was ever good to hear him talk of the Holy Methodist Church. He meant it. He was unapologetic about his church love and life. He stood sturdily on both feet while he walked and while he talked. It was not difficult to know where he stood on any business.

He loved the special labor to which the church had set him; and his spiritual eyes ranged over this continent and its adjacent islands exploring

where the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension should offer help. I hope I have the corporate title of his Board correctly, because I think he would well-nigh rise from his grave to rebuke me if I had it wrong. It was delicious to hear and see him rein anybody, everybody, upon a misnaming this Board he loved with the best blood of his heart.

Robert Forbes, brave soul and true, sturdy and strong, we hope to meet you in that morning land.

Bishop Charles W. Smith

The daughter of our dear, dead master in the church wrote me this week, recalling to my remembrance that preaching in Canton, Ohio, in the church of which her brother was the pastor, and in which William McKinley, of beautiful memory, had been a member, and over which Charles W. Smith had presided as pastor in gone-by days, I had said, referring to her dear father, that I feared every morning at waking I should hear that he had slipped away into the kingdom of God. It is thus I have felt for these years since I have known to my heart's great health, this blessed man whose character was shaped by such intimacy with the Christ. It is hard to think of the exit of such a man from our earthly scene. Clear it is that he is fit for any heavenly scene wherever placed, and that he will be sweetly at home in all heavenly company. It is also ap-

parent that we who tarry a little while have been immeasurably helped on the road to the better life by fellowship with this saintly lawyer in the things of God.

And yet we are so lonesome without him. We want him to be hanging around. Where he went to and fro it was homelike for us to be. A body seldom thought of Charles W. Smith's regality of brain stature because there was such geniality in all his behavior. He was a tall tree of the forest, but cast such gentle shade and turned the heated summer into such restful shadow that we were allured by the comfort of him and not alarmed by the height of him. If a body thinks of the folks he has known a whole lifetime through, could his memory light on another just such as this genial, mighty brain? Brains are apt to gather frost. But his brain never got within reach of frost because his heart and his brain always dwelt together. How swift and sweet his laughter! how he shook when a gust of humor caught him! I can see him now, tickling over some funny thing said or done in his presence. This man to whom the statescraft of Methodism was an easy thing and deposited by him as the night skies deposit dew, yet walked in the kindly land of sociability. He who might have practiced remoteness, customarily practiced unremoteness. He had learned lovingkindness from his Master whose name is Christ.

I grew to love him most, though I had admired

him all my lifetime, when we sat on the joint Hymnal Commission, which made the present Methodist Hymnal for the two Methodisms; then it was that I grew to love him and feel him, since which happy time he has been in our home and blessed it by his radiancy; and he and I have dwelt in the same house of hospitality during bishops' meetings and other convocations and whenever I saw him he was the same affable, equable, brainy, brotherly man who never seemed to take his own intellect seriously but made his brain to be a brother with the brain of any such as chanced to be with him. He had dignity and suavity and great poise, and to the last atom of his body and his soul was Christian.

At the General Conference when he was elected bishop I was extravagantly eager for his election, and had such joy in the fact that he and I were elected practically simultaneously, and it was my custom during these years to ask him anything hard that I couldn't manage and he would tell me what I needed to know, always gloving his knowledge and sequestering my ignorance by letting on that I knew as much about it as he did. This was the gentleman way of doing a favor and not letting on that he was doing any favor at all.

Could anything be more winsome than the way he stepped out into God's Holy Land? After happy conferences, presiding over brethren with whom he was associated long since, so that to me he said on my inquiring after his fall work,

"I never had three pleasanter conferences; everything was beautiful." And so delighted, and at rest in his own heart, without haste and without flurry, he stepped out into the saint's everlasting rest. The night before he died I bade him good night at the chancel of Metropolitan Church, Washington, where we clasped hands and his voice was sweet and his words were tender and I, little dreaming and he little dreaming, that the parting was until "the morning breaks and the shadows flee away," we bade each other "Good night" and when next I greet him we shall bid each other "Good morning."

Franklin Hamilton

Bishop Franklin Hamilton has changed his residence. He now dwells in the kingdom of God in the city called New Jerusalem. His assignment was not made by the General Conference nor by the Board of Bishops, but by the Bishop and Shepherd of his soul.

The bishops were in session, guests of his and the Methodism of Pittsburgh; but he could not come to bid them welcome. He was holding an interview with the Chief Shepherd. His courtesy, untaught, inbred, should have flowered in that hour of his brethren coming to his residential city. We all know how gracious a host he would have been, how refined and unaffected his words of welcome would have been. Now, these words

of brotherly welcome are yet to be spoken. I doubt not they will be uttered later when we shall, one by one, please God, arrive in the city where our brother has out-hasted us in arriving. He will not forget us in his residence in the Glad Continent where he has now landed.

We are all apprised how real is the loss Methodism sustains in the death of this big brain and purpose. He was beginning a new administration. He had held many places of taxing responsibility and each one honorably and well. Nowhere had he failed. He was honor student in Harvard, was class orator by the election of his class, was anniversary orator by the election of its faculty at the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Harvard University, and on that occasion spoke on the same platform with James Russell Lowell, and you may see the orations of both in the memorial volume of that distinguished event. He studied in Europe. Though he had been student in Germany, unlike most of those Americans, he was not unaware of the German character, for from the first hour of the German breaking out on civilization he spoke stern words of condemnation of the chief atrocity of human history. He was master of a trained mind, and lover of high things and an unobtrusive specimen of a cultivated American gentleman and Christian.

I cannot well speak of him, seeing I loved him. My heart is blurred with tears on this and every remembrance of him. He came to the episcopacy

trained for that service as few occupants of that position have been trained. How he invaded the new business is well known to such as had a mind to noble beginnings. It makes a body's heart tender as spring with first violets to recall, as I recall, how he had taken up his residence in the hearts as well as in the esteem and plaudits of his brother ministers and laymen in the Pittsburgh region.

He was American in his heart. He cared for the human race as Jesus taught him. He loved the black man, though truth to say he was not responsible for that, seeing his distinguished brother. Bishop John W. Hamilton, has fathered him and brothered him, and no better friend to the black man has appeared since Livingstone and Lincoln than John W. Hamilton. And it is fitting that Franklin Hamilton's soldier son in Europe, whose safe landing was the last earthly concern he voiced, and the telegram announcing it was holden in his dead fond hand at his burial, chose to be an officer in a black regiment.

I saw Franklin last after this wise: Before leaving Pittsburgh on my Master's business I called at the family residence, was admitted by the brave, beautiful widow who had so recently been a wife, was let into his room alone where my friend and your friend lay like a recumbent statue so strong and manly and as if asleep, and I said softly, "Friend, brother," but he was fast asleep and I did not waken him, but softly said, "I will

see you another morning," and passed out into the sunshine blurred with my tears.

And our brother is out on that landscape without the city where the leaves never will have autumnal tints nor come to withering, but where all the winds that blow are winds of spring and where the Shepherd of Souls leads his flock out in pastures infinite, where they are shepherded by the Voice of God.

A friend of mine, a minister, was at his soldier son's deathbed, when the boy sleepily said, "Kiss me good-night, daddy, kiss me good-night," and his father leaned over and kissed his boy on the face and softly, tearfully, replied, "Good night, son," but his heavenly Father kissed the soldier boy awake in the morning. So was Franklin Hamilton kissed asleep by the wife of his heart, but kissed awake by the Lord of his Life and dwells with much smiling in the Everlasting Day.

Bishop Robert McIntyre

I have deep sadness in the heart at the going of Bishop McIntyre. I had hoped he would rally and be in strength again. As I saw him last, I see him now at the bishops' meeting with that strangely winsome smile lighting his face like a lamp. He has gone smilingly out into his Father's house. It is the lonely and apart man that impressed me and impresses me. How often have I seen him in the city streets where the throngs

crowded, walking as in a dream. He was as lost as if he had been in some distant desert. The Scotch moors were not more lonely nor more sad than his spirit. I used to watch him in bishops' meeting and there he was listening, listening, but often not hearing. His spirit had gone on a walk out somewhere he loved—I used to think of the Wordsworthian line, "I wandered lonely as a cloud." He was ever a dreamer, a mystic, a beautiful mystic. He accused me of that, but certainly he was a mystic spirit brooding. He would sit at the fire and watch the flame dance as I have seen him do in our own home, and be a million leagues removed from us and from himself. I wonder how he will wander through the mystery of light and love in his Father's house?

At the last bishops' meeting his prayer on a day was so tender, so tearful, so hushed in great calm, so near the great Christ that I was smitten with his holy wonder and urged out toward God in its heavenly rush of soul. He was dreaming with his God; and we were at the dream. I shall always recall him at that voice and at the nearness to the Holy One of Israel. Robert McIntyre loved God. Things unseen and eternal were very sure to him; his Scotch nature was not hard, but had mist on its moors and rivers and the fall of rain and the burnie's wimple and then the gushes of sunlight that smote the heather wild with purple laughter. Scot he was; resolute, clean, craggy, and neighboring the sea.

I was a successor to him in a pastorate, and there always men said, "McIntyre was a man." He was. It was good to hear that of him. Patches of tenderness would smile out on you like a pool of violets upon a sunny bank. His eloquence was haunting. His voice had the violin effect on me —weird, pathetic, tearful, and ever a minstrel. Once on a car in a certain city a man said to me, "I have heard to-day one of the two great sermons of my life. One of the sermons was preached by Bishop McDowell; the one to-day was preached by Bishop McIntyre." It was sweet to hear. I told Robert of it, and his smile shone out on me and he was helped in courage. We shall miss that voice and that tall, erect figure and that sunset phrase and that winsomeness of soul which one must know the man well to encounter at the full.

I love to think on our love one for the other, and how love does not die but only in the Christ goes on a far and fairer journey. May this walker-in-the-throng find long spaces sown to stars in the heavenly land where his poet-heart may wander at its will, not lonely and not sad, but solitary for an hour to come back with the smile eternal on the face. He fares forth now upon the heavenly hills, and with him is the Comforter.

He used to sit by the hour and look upward, just look upward. And now he has gone where he looked.

SOME FRIENDS OF MINE IN PARADISE

The Story of Margaret

"Why stay we on the earth except to grow?" (Browning.)

A young woman, beautiful, vivacious, hugely feminine, with an alert mind, singularly brilliant in conversation, piquant, direct, fitted by every gift for social life and with not a single cloud along her sky, met with a trivial accident which developed into cancer with which the girl battled for twelve years and was at last slain by it—that is a geographical outline of a recent drama in actual human life.

She was unusually gifted. She had a gift of enjoyment which was extraordinary, a gift of being interested in people quite beyond the usual, a simplicity of delight in everyday things and people, a sure democracy in sentiment which had not in it a remotest touch of snobbery, a delight in people because they were people, a swiftness of sympathy with sobbing or joy, a penetrative intelligence in reading, an independence of view in all things literary or human, a tenacity of view which was sometimes belligerent but always delicious, a joy in her own people which marked with certainty the feminine instinct, a delight in her own blood kinsfolk which never wavered, a charming womanliness that only those of her own household fully knew, a gift of making friends which is very seldom equaled, a freshness of intelligence which minded one of the primitive in-

tellect, a critical gift in literature which in things human seldom failed of hitting the mark, a carelessness of established opinion whether civic, literary or social, a woman who delighted in color of fabrics and flowers, a carelessness about nature as such, coupled with a delight in multitudes and cities and travel and populations. She was not built on a country plan; she could not vegetate. She was frank as an open sky. The thoughts she harbored she readily expressed. She had a sense of humor not often equaled in women with a swiftness and deftness of repartee, exhilarating as a December wind. She was a church woman with a decisiveness in ethical standards which was puritanical and a latitude as to form which was exceptional. She was not what a casual observer would have catalogued as a spiritual spirit. She seldom talked of religious matters. She was verily human, swift in enjoying, wide in delight, full of rejoicing so that unless a body were acquainted with her well and long he would not understand her depth of spiritual sagacity and intent.

This writer has not known a more virile intelligence among women he has known; and it has been his fortune to know many women of rare gifts, and though he lived under the same roof with this girl for more than twenty years, he never tired of her talk. He called it "prattle" it was so engaging and overflowing and natural and sagacious and witty, so that in every right view of brilliancy of conversation it would be necessary

in truth to classify her as a brilliant conversationalist. She was so loyal to her own. It was a part of this man's sweetest memory how her own owned her. She was unfailing in her fidelity to her heart and those who held supremacy therein, whether they were sister, brother, mother, or father.

Her mother was unspeakably precious to her and held a supremacy of which she was altogether worthy. Those two were more sister and sister than mother and daughter. They were so unlike as to be complementary. The mother was reticent. the daughter voluble; and with the daughter the reticent mother became even volubly talkative. They enjoyed "talking things over" as their woman's phrase put it. To a man, to hear them doing it was like surprising a new delight. Though she grew to womanhood at home, it was singular how little she ever stayed away from her mother, away from whom she became homesick speedily. Please God, she may not be homesick for her now that she has gone to dwell with God.

She was like the branch of a growing tree which takes the weight of bird or storm upon itself but unwittingly and immediately springs back to place the second the pressure is removed. This resiliency of spirit was sublime and her affrontery to pain and care must be set down as deeply phenomenal.

When she was a beautiful and witching girl, to whom love was likely to come, and when she was

surrounded by admirers and suitors, her accident came; and her battle with disease and death began. Twenty-one times did she undergo major operations beside many minor ones. Long months of sleepless pain stabbed at her courage and vivacity, impairing neither. For weeks together and not infrequently, her life hung by a rotten thread. Weeks together she tasted no food, and how her life was sustained no physician could determine. Weeks of continuous nausea vainly tried to sap her courage. Opiates were used on her for all the years of her tragedy both for the operations manifold and to allay the tragic pain subsequent to them until it is safe to say that ninety men to the hundred would have become drug addicts. Yet this woman had the immense resolution to stop the use of the drug the very day the madding pain had surceased a little. She was scarcely out of the hospital from one operation till another became imperative, and so lived for years en route, so to say, from hospital to hospital. For more than a dozen years she was continuously under the charge of some skilled surgeon. Of all that company of surgeons every one was a skillful operator; and this story of skill is one to make a body proud of American surgical skill. Besides, these many physicians were so tender and considerate that they were counted not so much physicians as friends.

Sometimes there would be a halt in the virulent growth, but over the household was the fear that

never slept. Her sweet mother grew to have a sigh in her throat which she knew not of but her husband noted and grieved over. While this girl sat smilingly in the presence of the encroaching fear, she studied how not to let her own household know when the disease was recurring and clamoring for another operation. Many's the time she would come to her father with a wild sob in her voice and tears streaming down both her cheeks and throw herself on his heart saying, "Papa, again. Don't tell mamma. I won't cry again. I am not crying for myself but for dear mother," and they two would weep in each other's arms and then once again she would go about smilingly. The April rain had fallen and the sunshine glowed again. That father has met many brave men and women, but calmly records (if that can be counted as calm which chokes him like a rushing sea) that such smiling, unstudied, unconscious heroism has scarcely met him in a lifetime spent in first-hand contact with men and women unless that other competitive heroism be the heroism of the child's mother. Would he could write of these things as he felt them during the twelve years they fairly assaulted his soul. In the face of "deaths many" she kept radiant, smiling cheer like a June day. Betimes love wooed her, but who was she to think of love whose destination was a nearby grave? From city to city she was taken in search of the cure that never came. It was the perpetual joy of those who loved her to be able to use every

possible possibility of skill for her recovery. Pain and she were sisters. They kept perpetual vigil, though no stranger ever could have guessed it from her demeanor. She looked the picture of health and the day she went for her last operation a neighbor said to her father: "How well the daughter looks! She is the picture of health." The saddest thing her nearest ever encountered in the procession of sadness was when a new operation was determined on, to hear her singing some funny song to give out the impression that she was gay when she was hiding a breaking heart. He who writes has heard her singing so when he thought he should die of the sheer heroism involved in the song. To defend her family from her fears and pain, grew to be the studied study of her life and the unconscious study of her life. She would play chess with her brother when she was looking down into her grave and would talk to her sister glibly about a party when herself was to have a tryst with death. The singing, joyous abundant love of life was sturdily and all but steadily on her. She possessed singular mastery in diverting her own thought from herself. When she was in the stupor of dying, her voice rushed to speech to say, "Who will play chess with brother Billy now?"

Her love of being loved was beautiful and very pathetic. "Give me a love," was her accustomed phrase. Her rejoicement in the love of friends and family will never pass from memory. Her

wanting to be with her own and her own with her was fairly oppressive, she saying to her mother when with steady voice she was talking to that weeping woman about her funeral and the presence of her brother and sisters, "They will see me, won't they, mamma?" And they saw her! If she could not see them, she was shut in to the joy that beloveds would be with her and would look upon her silent face. And it so happened that in a little room belonging to the family in the old home town, there the silent dear heart lay and all her dear ones by her looking on her dear face. It seemed to her mother and father that she should have known and that she almost smiled. They would not have wondered if she had.

Her power of sympathy for distress was on her from a child and grew with her as the years passed; and, of course, when her own health was broken she had larger thoughts for others. There haunted her the sense of "the incurables." She was wont to speak in terms of lightness which hid depths of sorrowful brooding, of how she some day would be in an old people's Home or a house for incurables. She is saved from that. She is cured now. But the memory she would have of some sick folk long after she had left a city was evidenced by this or that remembrancer sent from time to time. The ability to put herself in another's place, which is the secret of Jesus, was hers in a strange measure. She could enter into a boy's life with zest, or into a girl's life. She fairly

plunged into what was of interest to others. It was very good to encounter. To the last it was so.

"What have you been doing, and where have you been, and what was said, and what did they wear, and what was it like, and did you have a good time?" were the fusillade of questions which shot from the sick bed and the wan face which never lost interest in others. She will make wide inquiries in the land whither she has now come.

To her friends who were many, because she had rare gift in making friends and had lived in many cities, being in a Methodist preacher's family, her steady cheer was like a gospel. It was a gospel. Her love of pretty things was girlish and passionate, and some piece of jewelry given her or a bit of woman finery she specially delighted in she would invariably take to bed with her. Her parents laughed over it weepingly then, but now can only weep over it. On her deathbed she asked the nurse to bring a gown she specially delighted in to show a friend, and at his request she was vested in it at her burial. Her love for crimson roses was as that of Omar, only his love beatified. At the last day of her life she held a red rose against her cheek for hours and would not let it go, saying softly to her mother beside her, "I always loved them so." We who miss her hope God may have at hand a red rose garden for her hands to pluck from in paradise.

As the pain-filled years came and passed, a haunting look of pain came to her eyes which

was not noticeable to others but to those who watched her with love's solicitude was unforgettable, and in her picture came to be visible to anyone. She had a native untaught skill in painting imaginary faces of women. Copying she could not do, but dream faces she could picture interminably. Many will see her though their eyes are wet, out on the porch by the lake where she sat talking volubly to visitors and painting as fast as she talked; and there was celerity in both.

Fourteen months before her death, owing to a cold taken in a severer climate than she was accustomed to, and being in a weakened condition from a recent operation, she was attacked by a terribly acute case of rheumatic fever which for two months seemed certain to be her death and from which she never recovered wholly. For the remainder of her life her hands were distorted so that she could not dress herself or cut her own food and was unable to paint the pictures in which she had delight. While in the wanderings of her latest breath she said, "Mamma, see this picture; don't you think it is as pretty as I used to paint?" and in her coffin, one of the things which invited the mourners to stay their grieving a little was the two poor hands with the rheumatism-stiffened fingers. Still she kept smilingly on through the year trying to massage her fingers into malleability. They are better now.

Then the operations multiplied. Closer to-

gether the growths came and grew with astonishing rapidity until as a last resort radium treatment was resorted to and to Baltimore she and her mother went. There she suffered things unspeakable. Every skill was used by skillful practitioners, but the disease had gotten into her blood. Here she was so sick and the homing instinct came on her mightily. She put her emaciated arms about her father's neck pleading: "Papa, take me home; dear papa, take me home. I want to go home with you." And when, totally unable for the journey, her brave mother took her to Chicago so she might face homeward, and through a series of kindnesses from nurse, physician, railroad conductor, brakesman, porter, and friends, the poor child the pain-crowded journey through kept saying "O mamma, isn't it sweet to be going home, so sweet, O mamma, so sweet!" Dear friends met them at Chicago and conveyed her to Wesley Hospital, where all that Christian courtesy and skill could do were at her service; where her physician was a dear friend, a member of her father's old church, and assiduous in kindness and competency, she all the while saying with a happy though weary voice, "O, mamma, it is so good to be here! I am so glad to be here." Nauseated for entire weeks so she could take no food, weakened by continuous fasting, yet smiling and courageous, and thinking of others—as this writer recalls all this he feels his cheek mantle with a blush that he has not been a braver man.

Sometimes in her tragic continuance of suffering she wished not to live, and putting arms about a loved one's neck she sobbed, "I won't see you any more, dear daddy," but at the normal the love of life and battle for it were mighty with her, and at the latest hour when she was drifting out irrevocably she told her mother how she wished she might stay with her one year more! The battle went against her, but the victory was hers.

We prayed for her day and night and hoped for her. Companies of friends across the continent were breaking hearts for her and praying for her. No murmur was on her lips. Her smile sweetened and grew more placid. She could not endure her mother from her sight all day. She must be near, nearer, ever near. The last day of her life save one, when her mother, overwearied, had gone for the night, the 'phone in her room rang and to her delight it was her dear daughter's voice speaking to her saying: "Can you hear me, mother? Isn't my voice strong? I am so much better. The doctor has found a new wash which eases my throat. I knew you would sleep better if I told you. Good night, dear mother."

The poison of the disease was aching through her blood. Her every muscle ached. Her lips could scarcely be opened enough to receive a drop of water, but she smiled, smiled!

On her last day, when she was certain she could not stay much longer, when the other land lay in plain sight of her, while her mother sat beside her

drenched with sorrow and longing, then she lay and spoke like a minister at the altar. She looked back across her life. She made no moan. She whispered no complaint. She counted her mercies out loud. She spoke slowly, placidly in an even voice of the things on which she had brooded over in these long, fearsome years. She spoke of her family, her rearing, her friends, the solicitude of care which had ministered to her every want through twelve suffering years. She cast no blame on God for her disease. Her theology in this regard was impeccable. She gave away her belongings, her trinkets and jewels, to the end that when she was gone the long while, those she loved might have a remembrancer from her. She left a ring to a dear little lad, her sister's son, for him to wear when he was grown to be a man. She left messages to her friends, calling them by name. She named her beloveds one after one, saying, "Dear Sister Mabel," "Dear Brother Billy," "Dear Allie Gayle."

She with insistency characteristic of her would not be put off until her mother promised her that now for twelve years having devoted herself to her, not to grieve overmuch but to make her life glad for the sake of those who remained. She would not take "No" but insisted until her mother promised; and then she smiled. She reiterated, her mother must not be sad for her, for she would be at rest. She spoke of her love for what she termed frivolity, but which her friends and

family counted sweet humanness, and when her mother's choking voice said, "God understands you, dear," "O yes," she said, "God will take care of me. I am not afraid of that." She saluted her mother with the oft-repeated "My lovely mother, my lovely mother," and was not amiss in her estimate. And when she was past speech, or seeming knowledge, she snuggled her mother's hand against her cheek. "I hear singing," she softly said and repeated, "We shall meet, we shall meet; what is the rest of that, mother? We shall meet." And when her mother sobbed holding the dear hand, "O my sweet daughter," the girl in sight of the other life comforted her mother, "Don't cry, mother, don't cry," and so passed out into the better land.

This writer has known many people, soldiers and the like; but as he thinks of them he is confirmed in his judgment that bravery like this is almost new to him and quite sublime.

This woman died this side of thirty, and yet by the help of God through the chemistry of suffering had achieved a character which for brave beauty makes a mountain peak an inconspicuous height.

For a young woman to live for years in unassailable calm in sight of the great hereafter, and in her last moments to speak of it in a level voice with a brain as clear as sunlight and a heart of settled calm like an apostle of God, moves him who writes as a mighty flood, and he

greatly thanks God, remembering the many mercies of a happy life, for being privileged to live so many years with this brave, beautiful, and gleeful spirit who with scant talk of religious things lived a life so bright, unselfish, beautiful, and brave; and he trusts in God that all the coming years he may walk with a braver step, with more sunny courage, with larger hope, with more unselfishness of thought and behavior until he sees the child in glory.

Said a maid to a beloved lady who was sobbing over the brave death of this dear girl, the woman herself wearing widow's weeds for a noble husband lately gone to God, "Miss Margaret has seen Mr. Barnhart before now."

If character be the largest growth beneath these rising and setting stars, if at our last high reach it is character we attain unto, then this girl has achieved what kings have died unknowing. If staying on the earth, as Browning thought, is but to grow, then has this sweet woman used earth's saps well up and had scant need of longer staying.

O Hope of Christ, we bless thee with our broken hearts that if it were not so thou wouldst have told us.

XIV

CARELESS CREEK

CARELESS CREEK is the name of a wandering, noisy water in wide Montana. Who christened it nobody knows; more's the pity. Who did name it merits a plaudit. He saw things and said things. That is poetry.

The name romps into a body's heart, plumps into the center of it like a frog into a pond when somebody comes too near him. Kerplunk he goes. So this name does.

The first time I heard this name I laughed out loud in sheer delight. It hit my spot. Everybody has or should have a careless spot in him somewhere—some giggling point where there is no joke, something done natively like a pine bough swaying in the wind—some unpremeditated activity of mind or mood or body like a baby's cooing when it lies by itself just wakened from sleep. When I heard the name "Careless Creek" my careless spot sang out "Goody!" like a robin red-breast in the spring. "Careless Creek!" How bewitching! There it giggled along noisly among the roots of pines or under the roots of pines or under wind-tossed branches of shadow, dashing out into the sunlight, growing placid in pools of quiet, whispering away in a current all speed and laughter where

the trout takes his jump like a miniature finned tiger, out into a wide ripple where it has scarcely water enough to go around, then gathers into a pool big enough for wild ducks to frequent in spring or fall migrations and where the seeded grasses cluster and hang over as a solicitation to bird hunger, then under a bank where at noon it is dark, then becomes solemn as a little girl at church holding a hymn book, or a little boy trying to fool his teacher, then out into the sunlight where a meadow loves the sunlight and bathes in the luster of noon, where the brook crimsons to the advent of sunup and blushes to the sunset of the day—then round and round itself like a kitten trying to catch its tail, and then into the shag of wood shadow again but with much laughter, as if playing hide-and-seek with itself and then adventuring! That is Careless Creek.

This creek is a water greatly to be desired by all who are wise in the things of the Spirit. The prank players are always wise. The fool plays no pranks. "Be quiet," said a wise man in the midst of prank-playing, "there comes a fool." Wherever Careless Creek is we must haunt it. By good fortune it lies not far from anybody's house. Every little water is careless. The great streams are grown laborious, thoughtful, prankless. That is their sorrow. They have lost their sprightliness and have grown somber like an old cat. What a pity a cat cannot stay kittenish! That would be cat perfection. A kitten is one of the funniest

things of God's invention. A rheumatic would grow frisky watching kittens play. They are all improvisers. They play no tune composed beforehand. So kings' fools once did. They now leave it to kings. A tired big body can lie on the floor by the hour watching the tom-foolery of little kittens and be greatly rested by it and be much the better for it. Every house ought to have a kitten in it, but never a cat. A cat has forgotten youth, which is a sin, a cardinal sin. A cat has settled down into complacency and selfish ease, but is careless no more. He is sober as a mummy.

Careless Creek loiters if it feels like it, hurries if it wants to, and has no call to arrive. What luxury that is!—the unpremeditated life. What fun it is to start nowhere and not arrive. The pest of travel is that you are starting somewhere and fussy until you arrive, and more fussy when you arrive. It is all a schedule. You feel like a timecard. You are dated up like an almanac and there is no spontaneity in an almanac any more than in a timecard.

There is a charm in the worn footpath and likewise a charm in the unattempted way. The way across lots where the marsh catches you by the ankles and you kershlosh in water to your knees or beyond them, where the tussocks of grass play tickle with you and the grasshopper flicks out of your way and a swamp orchid may shine up at you like an unlooked-for smile, or a blue flower

may bloom in some hollow made by a trespassing cattle foot—all is new and not ready-made.

We are fettered by the expected. Things are where things were and how they are. Some sweetness lies past doubt in the familiar ways: the accustomed place, the chair, the picture—where it has hung these years, the books on the shelf where you could find them in the dark. But we grow to be prisoners of this settled order. We get old-maidish. We are cross-grained at change and scoldy at improvisation. Things must be in place like a corpse. Only the dead are absolutely reliable, and when we think of it we wish they were living and a bit uncertainish. I wish the grave on the hill might be emptied and the hoyden who lies there so staidly might invade the room and the hearth and our whole world with cyclonic laughter and spontaneous jest and rush of spirits, like a sudden wind coming from the hills. Ah me, that would be a holiday!

If some staid soul says this essay is a plea for topsy-turvydom and things out of place, like a boy's room, I cannot quite deny the charge, although I do not quite agree either. In a word, I am careless about it although we have had a boy's room topsy-turvy till a whirlwind could have felt perfectly at home there, and it has been full of boys of various dimensions and conditions and freckles, and now the room is quiet all the while and quiet enough for an invalid to fall asleep in, but my heart aches for the rubbish of the boy and

his belongings and his boy friends, all which will never come again. They are gone as if the sea had taken them away on its bosom: they will return no more. The tides of the sea sometimes bring back what they bear out to sea, but the tides of the years bring nothing back save memories. In the room, there is his picture, his freckled face with his head at a stiff but very boylike angle. The photographer frightened him and diverted him from his natural mien and manner. He is as I have seen him across the table solemnly pinching his sister, and when prayers were in process! Laddie, laddie, O laddie, come back, come back and litter up the room. And there is no answer. The room is not touseled as his hair was, now. The room is not impassable as a Fourth of July and filled with the boom of cannon which the boy or the other boys had made in a wrestling match in which some of them or all of them kerflumixed on the floor. All is quiet: and but that I am a man I would weep out loud over it.

Life as it ages tends to lose carelessness and variety and the unintended action and unpremeditated spontaneity. We are like known seas, all charted, and become navigable truly, but adventureless. We never surprise ourselves. We arrive on schedule, that is all. If somebody is waiting for us, we are prompt, that is all. Nobody wonders at us nor do we wonder at ourselves. O the pity of it! The enthusiasm of youth as I listen to its funny gabble of which I never tire is

that though it is mainly meanness, bywordy, filled with the "don't-tell-mes" and "who'd-have-thought-its," it still has the glow of the unintentional. You might be narrow and say "No thought in it," but that would be uncharitable, since all of us did as those do; nor would it be wise, for it has what thoughtfulness might not have—the spring of a branch when the bird alights or flits from it, the fine suavity of youth, the ruddy laugh, the chime of laughter, sweeter than skilled music. It is absolutely impossible to forecast what youth will do or say or think. Youth arrives, is all you can say. It bubbles up like a spring of laughing water. Nothing is more stale and unprofitable and insipid than a stereotyped letter taken from a letter-writer—"Mr. Blank requests the honor of Miss Blank's"—but when they run for a street car there will be nothing stereotyped. Even a falling down will be unpremeditated.

The ruts wear into the soul, and the worst of it is that we do not know or we may not know it. Care takes possession of our unconsciousness. We pass from day to day into the rut in the road and cannot turn out unless driven to it by the oncomer who insists on his part of the road. Things grow eventless rather than eventful. We are unwearied by routine which is a worse thing than being wearied by routine. When we are wearied by routine our wings speak. When unwearied by routine our feet are our captains. We must not

be dull like horses that walk a treadmill. Surprise must play peek-a-boo with us at frequent corners of the streets. "Who will be along the path this day?" is a wise monologue of each passenger, which keeps him alert, silent, inloquacious, but expectant.

Yes, Careless Creek is a stream the soul must hie to. It lies so near, sings so sweetly, wanders so fearlessly—as fearless as a bird in the dark. I can hear the happy call of its voices in the midst of many cares: and the music, I must say, is enchanting. Who wants that wandering water wants it for always. He would not live there—that is another matter. He would live with care—that is life's business, but not all life's business. Part of life's business is to be unbusinesslike. It is not worth while to become the pigeonholes which make up an office desk. That is as dreary as the mud flats when the tide is out. Mud flats have the happy encroachment of the sea, blue, blithe, radiant. Life must not be more a mud flat than the ocean's shore. The preacher who forgot the wedding at which he was to officiate had it to his praise that he could forget business. And that preacher who forgot to purchase a marriage license for his own wedding must be acquitted of dreary monotony of activity.

It is good to let yourself stroll. Following a body's feet is not always a sign of empty-headedness. It may well now and then be a sign of a wisdom such as the sand pipers and curlews are

possessors of. Sometimes we go to school, downtown, to the railroad station, to bed. These are customary harbors where we cast customary anchor. Then there are blessed sometimes when we just go. We are destinationless as whippoorwills at song in the night. I am often allured of going somewhere. I must do that so continuously. I love it. It is how my life maintains its part in this great brown world which has been very, very kind to me. I rail not at it. I have no grumpiness about it. I do not consider myself abused in that my day's work must be done manfully; rather, I am glad of the world's confidence in me, and that it has reliance in me and thinks that I am necessary is a joy far past the telling. Nevertheless, I do grow tired going somewhere always. I want sometimes to go nowhere in particular. I want to gad about. I want to loiter or hasten as the whim is. I want to be scheduleless for a day. Let me rise with the lark or the goose as seemeth best. I have been bidden often to rise with the lark. No one has bidden me to rise with the goose, wherefore that befits Careless Creek; and I wot that the goose is a water-fowl as the lark is not.. Wherefore is the goose in harmony with this water. Even carelessness has its logic if you press it not too far.

I am wondering if some part of that incalculable charm which old Sam Johnson did exercise, has exercised, does exercise over men's spirits, is not to be accounted for in part by his sturdy assertion

of leisure, by his going out and staying out as if a world of literary matters did not bark at him like a kennel of hounds. He refused to be fettered whether in an inn or a library. He wanted out and away. Townsman was he, but a wandering, vagabond townsman. I hear him striking out, sturdily going nowhere. He was like a wind on a moor. I believe it of him that he was an inveterate freedom of spirit flight, boisterous, even tempestuous, but out to meet the adventures of the road. Likewise I think that some of that eternal freshness of Jack Falstaff lay in that he was outward bound. He was a traveler. His ease was at his inn. He had no home. The highway was his garden where he dug and hoed. Something you cannot prophesy is in him. Not his vast jest is the full quiver of his wonder that suffices to give him a laughing immortality. His vagabondness is part of his mystery and merit. Gentlemen of the road—that is the witchery of that otherwise rather senseless performance. The wandering water gets into the secret places all across the spiritual landscape. Fishermen go where they do not have to go. They come in when they are ready, and nothing is ready made. They are not making a scientific investigation nor preparing for a piscatorial thesis. They are loafing, joyously taking long, unmeaning jaunts which weary but do not tire. They have forgotten what they work at for a living. Their feet go and they follow their feet or the streams run and they follow the

running. Their ears are filled with the laughter of wings they do not see. Every whisper of swaying branches, every slosh of the grayling in the stream or trout in the brook whispers, "Be careless; this is Careless Creek."

Every well-informed soul finds himself walking as if he were walking in his dreams and suddenly asking nobody in particular—just interrogating the atmosphere—"Is this the road to Careless Creek?"

"No such thing around here," sweatily answers the business man.

And the happy somnambulist replies, wandering on: "I think it must be near here. I am certain I smell the wood smells and its damp perfumes and catch the tang of its swaying willows." And a little farther on he smiles, "I hear its waterfalls calling me."

The staid rivers—the Nile, the Euphrates, the Jordan, the Ganges, the Tiber, the Thames, the Hudson, the Mississippi—are not the streams beckoning the pilgrims to Careless Creek. These are all crowded like a crowded street. They sin against privacy and loitering. There you must step lively and avoid the passing car, whereas out on Careless Creek everybody walks. There are no autos or carriages or railways. It is a country haunted by silence and sibilant song. Nobody hurries: nobody crowds: nobody asks whence you come nor whither go you. People do not come to Careless Creek, they just drift in, they arrive

like bluebirds in the spring, just as friends do not call, but drop in. When the season arrives for my annual journey to Careless Creek next, I shall happen in along its banks and happen to be sitting with bare feet hanging in the water and feeling foolishly, sagely happy, and when I am sitting as I love to sit, chancing to lift up my eyes, I shall see across the stream, with bare feet kicking in the waters and the fish line wandering down with the current, a friend I love beyond words to frame it, and I shall not be surprised to see him though a year has happened since last we met, but I smile and he will smile, and we will say softly, so as not to tell the fish we are there waiting for them, how sweet the light is on the water, and how lovely the shadowed grasses in the stream, and how the sky is blue beyond anything we ever knew, and the water more tenderly engaging than we ever found it! and that we are both hungry as we never had been before, and we wonder what the sweet housekeeper at our house will have for dinner. We are never surprised at Careless Creek—only just glad and expectant. We do not exclaim; we just gratefully and gleefully receive and say grace.

Now as I come to recall the people I have met, it occurs to me that the lack of fascination in many I have known who were fairly obese in knowledge and travel and relevant information was that they have never heard of Careless Creek. They were encyclopædic if you needed knowledge, but they

had no irrelevant information. All they knew was classified as a botanical specimen. The persons who have proven pure fascination to my spirit, I now recall, were those who were rich in asides and whose words were most fragrant when saying nothing much. They have been so many places where they have had no call to go. They might not have been at the tourist points, but at points of no tourists they were frequent visitors. Such women and men are delicious, like cherries eaten from the trees. To eat cherries from a box bought at the grocery store is pretty tame business, whereas to climb a cherry tree and quarrel with the blackbirds and robins and catbirds for your cherry is as much fun as being a butterfly.

Many people are informed, well-read, useful, traveled, yet are remote from the power of casting a spell over your spirit. They do not lure you, do not hold the fairy wand which, when you are touched by it, you become dweller in Oberon's Land. They do not glare, neither do they glow. It is worth much to have a firefly glow, and so be lamplight in yourself, for any twilight which could omit the starlight and not be in the dark. Not light enough to read by, but light enough to dream by and keep alive the happy sense of luminosities not set down in scientific treatises. "The Beloved Vagabond" of William Locke had that on him, or I miss my guess. Those things about him which we would forget or omit were extraneous. They could be wiped off or washed off;

those things which we wish never to forget are intrinsic like the light of suns. Many great men have no lure: while many lesser men have a lure like the gloaming when the robin redbreast calls good night.

Is it not this absence of lure of Careless Creek which is the tiny rift in the lute which, if it does not destroy, does tarnish their music?

The quality which resides in the vesper sparrow, the haunting, is that it? Where is the vesper sparrow? Well asked, but not readily answered. That bird of longing is sequestered, is out along Careless Creek somewhere. We shall encounter nothing other than the voice of him and that suffices. Many singers would sound better if they were invisible. In "Morte d'Arthur" it is descriptively said of Sir Bedevere that he was "No more than a voice in the white winter of his age." "No more than a voice"—my Lord Laureate, thou hast fastened a fine phrase upon our dreaming. Much food for imagination is here. Just to be a voice, a hid voice, an unlocalized voice, a cuckoo call along the fringes of the spring—that is quite enough. That satisfies as presences and noisy presences do not.

And Tennyson himself—was that a voice? "No more than a voice," howbeit not in the white winter of his age alone only, but all his life. He was just over the hill in a thicket from you. He was elusive; and this elusive quality has about it unthinkable poetries. Tennyson was much given

to wandering out by Careless Creek ofttimes when it swam like a sea wave out into the sea.

Frequenters of Careless Creek are not citizens with a crick in the back, but with a cricket on their hearth. That is quite another matter. A cricket in the heart is to have a hearth and warmth and a song—a song of gladness, and over little, a spirit of thanksgiving over things many might consider no sufficient theme for gratitude. They rejoice over minor matters. They find flavor in the shavings of their own work bench, and, tasting their own sweat of labor, think it honey from white clover hives. They have a tang. They are like gorse burning yellow against the glow of heather.

This Careless Creek is a marvelous water. The Tweed and the Dove and the Bonnie Doon are lovely waters. I love their songs. But commend me to Careless Creek. It is a mystic water. It companies with dreams. It flows so dreamily, so dreamfully, so fitfully, so fearlessly, so witlessly, so wanderingly. It goes no man knows whither. We never ask into what stream it flows. That would pluck the shadow from its mystery. Let it flow, let it flow, is enough for us who frequent this stream. So it flows, we rest content. Its source and its quest are alike inconsequential. It is. That is our laughter. It shines across this meadow and gives back star for star by night. It hushes its voices in the daylight and lifts its voices in the starlight. So the frogs do in the

spring time streams. It grows bold in the dark, in the beautiful dark. It hath its rifts of silence and then its rush of melody. Only to lovers of the fitful stream, silence is music and music is silence.

This is a magic water. If you wander there life grows young. And years slip away from the shoulders like a mantle when your tired feet press the yielding sward of this unaccustomed stream. Fret blows away like dust when the wind hurries, care fades away and forgets where it was laid. Hapless fear forgets why it was afraid, tears often wonder why they were upon the cheek and tired feet run barefoot along the soft grasses that edge the water or go splashing across the shallows. The laughter which had gone silent (unwittingly) for weeks, now clamors like bugles. This is Careless Creek.

On autumn days when the woods were just past their superlative splendor and the air was crisp as celery and when a wind-shield was not an impertinence, a sweet friend of ours who loves Careless Creek and all its tributaries, took some one I love and me and some one he loved as himself and one other, a man of much music and soul, and we together went wandering wanderingly out into the Pocanoes. The way led always by the waters. We passed over bridges beautiful and moss-grown with their arches and loveliness and watched where the lichens grew green, but always along the stream over it, by it, not from it, where

we saw hundreds of visions of loveliness to dawdle over in memory and fondle like the hand of one you greatly love, still crossing and re-crossing and re-re-crossing the same stream and stopping beside and going down and splashing the hands in the laving waters; and all the streams were Careless Creeks. They were just jubilant. Much as I have wandered in the lovely hills, I have never encountered such abundance of lovely and laughing and singing streams as in the Pocanoes; and I shall always cherish that landscape in my memory as the Land of Careless Creeks. Never any of these waters very wide nor very deep, but wide enough for loveliness and deep enough for dreams and swift enough for music and filled full with little warbling, bubbling rivulets which came together with a rush and many eddys and much foaming and fantastic delight that made my heart glad as running water; and this sweet friend loving it all, knowing about it, frequenting it for many years, never forgetting it, hieing back to it by spring, by summer, by icy winter, by gaudy fall, and loving it mostly in blossoming spring when it loitered and saw the rhododendrons in their wild luxury of blossoming. And yet the streams are always new to him as he had never seen them before. So is Careless Creek ever unfamiliar water. Here careless men grow prayerful. Prayer comes handy and natural at Careless Creek. Itself is praise and ministers to devotion. Prayer is never out of place when the grass leans down to

kiss the stream. The streams are not more careless than we and all our journey was laughter set with song.

On the banks of Careless Creek the comers sprawl on their backs and watch the clouds drifting across the far-off blue or through the swaying branches of the trees survey the patches of the blue and the wind washes from the summer land washing across the face and bathe it in a calm like the winds of the starry night. Leaves shiver and whisper like lovers. Willows beckon with their deep shadows. The birds sing till 'tis noon and then hush in fatigue of music. The far eagle soars or the catbird calls as the brook recites a sonnet to the sun. Fishermen sit silently as if rooted in the bank or rise right lustily as having caught something, and each chaffs each as catching nothing, and women who came to see that their husbands do not drown while adventuring in piscatorial art sit and knit in the shade and smile with that sweet content which comes only from a woman's heart at rest, or little children wade in the water bare-legged and shouting, or a rowboat or canoe makes its way with laughing delight. Careless Creek admits of all comers with their sport. This is the land and this the water along the lap of the stream and the voice of the trembling falls and the dip of the oar or the laugh of the waters on the boat prow when the wind has forgotten to loiter. The minnows flash through crystal waves: women sing not knowing that they

sing; men are piscatorially silent or roisteringly gleeful: and life is come back to boyhood. Men forget they are gray and have reputations established. Careless Creek has no LL.D. or Judge. Every man here is "Bill" or "Jim" and nobody wears gloves or owns a complexion. Everybody is as much a thing of the sky as the birds and the clouds; and laughter comes as readily to the lips and eyes as voices to falling water.

It is a happy water, this Careless Creek. No one can prophesy just where it runs; it is to be happened onto. It is not set down sagely on the road maps. We happen on it and then a beatitude. If anyone wants to say so, it is a waterway of the heart. It runs everywhere for such as know. It runs nowhere for such as do not know. Not to be found by any discoverer who goes equipped for the adventure, but to be loitered on by any who will venture forth questless. It is a sweet land in winter. I have stumbled along its banks of greenery and by its shadows of peace with a ripple on its water as if a swallow had touched it with its wing, when winter was tempestuous and the cold was biting. And I heard no wind whining at the window-sill nor at the chimney, but I heard the lapping of the water on my boat prow as I lay nor asleep nor awake, only wandering out with my spirit.

To loiter in spirit, with the wind, to drift like an October leaf, falling silently through Indian Summer skies. To forget, to feel the tug of dear

hands which on silent breasts are folded years, years ago, to not weep at their memory, only smile as having them once more, not missing them, just having them—all this on Careless Creek. For Careless Creek is ever peopled with our beloved. The little child, your son, your daughter, your sweet friend greatly beloved, immeasurably missed, the swish of a woman's garment which was sweet to the hearing of the heart as the swish of the stream and more sweet, the boy's call, loud as a bugle, "Daddy, I caught one," and the girl's laughter, O that laughter, saying, "I good girl." O Careless Creek, you are so populous to my heart!

When I think of this as a land of solitude I do belie my knowledge. Thou art the peopled land —peopled with the things of life which are dearest, quite dearest. Nobody ever moves out of Careless Land. Everybody moves in and there is no mover out; no house to let. No tent made of tree branches ever knows a withering leaf or a departed fragrance. We need not talk in that quiet land where voices soften so that starlight can be heard while all those loud voices chime at lusty chorus. The picnics are not in the past, but in the ever-enduring present. There is no past on the bank or bosom of Careless Creek. We all stay always. It really is the only land of perpetual habitancy. Not that we are all young there. God forbid. We want no land like that here, where sunsets conclude the sunrisings. Gray hair is here. The quality of wonder in this magic land

on these magic banks by these magic waters is that age stays as it was. The old stay old: the young stay young; the noontide folks stay at their hour. As we appeared when first we set vagrant foot by this vagrant water, so we abide. We are a delectable company. No erasures will occur in our list of loitering inhabitants. They come to stay. These be the real abiders. "Now abideth," saith the sweet Scripture, "faith, hope, love, and the greatest of these is love." These be the inhabitants of Careless Land—the dreamers beside careless waters.

They wander and wonder, wonder and wander. Careless Creek is always new—old, old—new. They wonder not less at its accustomed loveliness, because it is accustomed, but rather more, for the wonder is most wonderful that the wonder stays unstaled by much acquaintance. It is the land of love, and we may explain it so. Love's wonder is at its latest hour most to be wondered at. Love lasts so. Love lives so. Love is sure immortality. It is said, I know not how truly, that such as love Careless Creek and wander down it far enough, whether on foot or on shores or in rowboat along the waters, find far down not so much a widening water as a change of landscape. One who is known as the Living Water, whose company is greatly coveted by loiterers on this stream, and in whose company they find vast solace unacclimated to care and as they come returning to the land they mainly spend

their time and stay beside the trancing water unbuffeted, unacclimated of care and are called the Redeemed by Him whose this land is and the stream and all the flowers perfumed like the breath of God.

And almost anywhere I have seen a signboard dusty, sunburned, weather-worn, on which was written in a mystic hand, "The Road to Careless Creek," but curiously no finger was on the sign and no directions given. Clearly, we shall need to chance on with that mystic water which meanders through the starlit, dawnlit land of dreams.

I hear it purling; and mine eyes catch the sheen of it among the osiers not far off, and I hear like the droon of August, "Come, I am Careless Creek; here I am, here." "But where?" then like receding melody, "Near—I, Careless Creek."

"O Careless Creek, O Careless Creek;" and very far away like an echo rather than a voice. "Here." "Here" (and much suppressed laughter), "here I am, Careless Creek!"

XV

CHURCH SPIRES

A CHURCH spire is the most spiritual thing man has contrived. It is, therefore, the most poetical; for things spiritual are the highest form of poetry. Greek temples had no spires. Spires came with Christ. The irresistible poetry of him ran along the veins of men like sunlight until when they came to build a place of worship out in the sunlight, far from the catacombs, unconsciously they flung their architecture into aspiration. A spireless church is an eyeless structure, having lost the essential spirit of what it is. Those churches which are built like a library building, or a court of justice, or an opera house have lost the beat of the heart of ecclesiastical architecture. Men should not be tolerated as church architects who do not have in their own hearts the secret of God and the distillation through their plans of the mood of the gospel. This is a cardinal sin of contemporaneous church architecture. It has been secularized. In the name of something new they have imposed on the untutored in these fine spiritual atmospheres the grim spirit of utility that leads to the forgetting of God.

A church is the only thing of its sort on this

earth. There are no kinsfolk to churches. They belong to the immortality of man, while all things substellar belong to the temporality of man. They die as man was thought to die before The Deathless came and wrought havoc with death. In the passion for utility, for modernity forsooth, for social rooms and serving rooms and the most modern Sunday school appliances, we have been led far and away from the sublimity which a church really is, and must remain if so be it shall retain its shining hold upon the life of the world. Utilitarian church architecture forgets central things—not matters of minutiæ, but a heart thing. A church is a reminder of man and a reminder of God and a reminder of both of them in the same breath; not man one time and God another time, but to think of both simultaneously and always so, as we think of summer and greenery, as we think of motherhood and tenderness, as we think of darkness and dew. As far as a church building can be seen it should remind him who sees it of his God.

Wherever a spire springs skyward the observer knows a church is set. The spire is a finger pointing to our rendezvous of eternity. Our homeland is the sky, where dwells the Master of Eternity at whose behest we mortals make our quest into the infinite. If in a spirit of materialistic fault-finding some one should call this other-worldliness, we do not argue, but rejoice. We know that the church is built on the ground, but is not from the

ground. It is from the skies and to the skies. It climbs skyward because thence it came and thither it aspires. Like a man, the church sets foot upon the ground, but walks out into the sky. He walks the ground; he inhales the sky. Man takes to the sky like the mountains and the birds. Those who think of him as a terrene thing lack grasp of his personality and immensity—both of his soul and his body. Man is not "of the earth, earthy," in the way users of that phrase often intend it. Man has a spire to his soul. When strange Thoreau said, "Time is the stream I go fishing in"—what did that curious recluse stumble toward save that man was larger than time and more lasting, and could use it as an appanage of his soul? And quite certainly time is larger than earth. The roots of life are in the earth like the roots of pines, and—like the pines too—life crests in the sky against the dayspring and the star-drip and the soothing voices of the wandering winds. We must compute man's entirety. He is cubic. Height is his third and sublime dimension and is least negligible of all his proportions.

A Christian church symbolizes man in this immense entirety. A church house is a parable of man, likewise a parable of God. The homely holding to the ground, the glorious holding with the sky—this is man. Earth is a shifting sandbar on the wild ways of the sea. The sky is the ageless durability. On it is no hint of age or withering. Young as that far-off first morning

when the sky first arched blue, so the sky abides. The shifting years have lumbered along under its wide expanse, but have left no fleck of dust from their worn sandals along its fair highways. There it towers, domed in immitigable majesty, fair as the blue flower which somewhere God grows to wear above his heart, and new—always new—and misty with mystery and mercy. Mountains lessen in height, and the valleys are slowly wasting into the sea, while no wash of rain nor pressure of years diminishes the stature of the sky. The sky is to the world what the soul is to the body. Man builds skyscrapers for business, but does not eventuate them in a spire. Their utility is of the earth, worthy, unambiguous. It traffics in time: man traffics in eternity. There lies the difference; and it is an immeasurable difference and utterly sublime, and holds all of man as it holds all for man. It is the mute oratory of the soul. There should be no hesitation in being able to discover what a church is not—as there should be no hesitation in being able to discover what a church is. It is not a refectory nor a debating chamber—though it has place and room for both. Its supremacy and primacy should speak unambiguous as a daydawn. I know railroad stations with noble campaniles, but never one with a spire. Utility knows its limitations and has an innate modesty which we do well to fathom. The early men of prayer and faith and love who built cathedrals built them cruciform, after the instrument on which

the Savior died. That was the ground plan. Then rose the roof, with vast vault like an immature sky, and that, in turn, leaped Godward as the blue into which the same Savior leaped on wings of light on that far-away and yet near-at-hand day when he swept up into glory behind the glory where we shall some good day abide with him. The spire points to this acclivity as to mutely admonish, "Thither haste ye."

Nothing in beautiful England is so engaging and captivating as the sight of church tower and spire before you behold aught else in the approaching city. All else a city possesses shrivels in loveliness as compared with the severe and holy control a cathedral takes, as by divine right, of the city where it builds its walls against the sky. I cannot speak the effect these cathedral bulks have on my spirit, but all about is made holy ground, and all the sky and twilight or noon seem to be taken in hand as by the angel of the Lord. And the same is true of the hamlet or countryside where through the greenery the village church tower stands, sentinel of God, to keep safe through the night to dawn the "little town of Bethlehem," where it resides and presides. It haunts a body, soul and sight, as nothing else I encounter in all England has power to do. Not all England's history and storied ways can crowd the soul with wonder and dream like the church. The cathedral in Stratford-on-Avon lords it over the world of quiet water and sloping downs and storied

Kenilworth and bastioned Warwick Castle so that —aside from the crystal genius who once was there and now is everywhere—the cathedral where his dust is stayed mounts on high to say that spirit cannot dim nor die.

Approaching the cathedral cities of England is a royal visitation. What kings have been there does not invade with its trivial impertinence. That the Spirit of God has been there of old and resides is the kingly feature that grips the hands of the soul; and man has still a Friend where God resides. A cathedral comes across the spirit like daydawn across the hills. One yearns for the apocalypse of those cathedral towers and spires growing high and holy in the foreground as, in spirit or body, or both, approach is made to those old homes of prayer, where what may be said in a half dream is that "here prayer was wont to be made." We do not, with hesitant step and word, consider that here men are wont to die and from these holy altars men are wont to be buried. What we do get impression of is that here men and women take their boat to the far shore where deathless morning waits to shine across the sky with eventual glory. It is the cathedral we come to see, and it is the cathedral we do see ere we see the community where it is built. The inspiration of this bit of ground that will not be satisfied until it invades the high places of the sky meets us across approaching fens or river meadows where the waters meet. It is a spiritual ecstasy to make

this encounter, and all other recollections are unfit intruders. God is in that place.

Consider these cathedrals of England, how they make their climb heavenward. In this catalogue is given the main impression one gets from the approach. It can be modified by another direction of approach, but this gets at the high fact that all of these houses of God and man are aspiration-bound, and build them into the heavens whose prophets they all are: Canterbury has three main towers, each capped at each corner with spires. York has one vast, unshakable tower and another lesser tower capped with spires—though the lesser tower is vast in itself, but, related, is less majestic. Oxford Cathedral's main feature seen afar is its spire. Exeter has tower capped with spires accompanied with many lesser spires. Salisbury has lordly spire. Bristol has tower with spires. Gloucester has tower capped with spires. Hereford has two spires and tower; Saint Paul's, a vast dome and spire; Westminster Abbey has double, exulting, haunting towers; Truro has three spires.

What thrills the heart of a traveler nearing Canterbury is the proud uplift of its towers, springing not only far above the city roofs, but far above its own roof, and the four corners of the towers capped with spires.

I doubt if anything man has built can exceed the dignity and impressiveness of Durham Cathedral as seen from Framwell Gate bridge. The

cathedral seems climbing the hill with sturdy, fearless feet, the immense single tower almost looking level-eyed on the summit of the hill and the double tower building a mass of majesty which makes the soul mute. As seen from the railway station more of the cathedral is visible, and there roof and towers tremendously dominate the scene and put the city into Lilliputian shadow. To have viewed this scene is to have climbed a high hill of prayer. The view from beautiful Elvet Bridge, where the huge tower is seen over the house roofs climbing the hill as if on their way to church, could do no other than hush the spirit to reverence and prayer. Great Durham!

Lichfield has its spires. From the one side seems one heavenly spire which claims the sky, and from another side two equal spires salute the sky with the one spire standing back and silent, as looking on its sister spires, and all the spires meekly say, "We climb to God." Peterborough has one tower and many spires, as seen from the front, and each somehow lost in the other. Saint Albans has as a massive main feature one great tower to watch for morning to dawn. The spires are incidental. Wells Cathedral has one huge and engaging tower climbing from the center of the building like some lordly ascending flame, and at the four corners, like lesser flames, are spires aspiring yet a little above the huge bulk of sacred flame. Worcester Cathedral has spires at all corners of the sacred fane, and these are crescendoed

by a massive main tower impressive beyond the telling. Not a nobler spire can be conceived than that of Chichester Cathedral. It soars aloft like an angel. As a body walks up Eastgate Street, Chester, the spire of the Cathedral leaps from the ground at the street end and seems all there is except the sky. One sees no church: he only sees the spire—sweet sight and memorable! Ripon Cathedral crowds on the sight like the bulk of great hills. Roof and towers seem almost on a level, and all give such a sense of mass and age and enduringness as one seldom can encounter aside from the mountains. And what a sight the Cathedral of Ely is from the fens—high-climbing majesty with a tip of a spire flashing at lesser height like the very spirit of religion. Gloucester Cathedral from the paddock impresses the observer as all tower, huge as a cathedral where the multitudes might worship God. What impresses most at Hereford is the tower. Winchester Cathedral has a strong tower looking like the Rock of Ages. And then great Lincoln Cathedral seen by moonlight, where the three equal towers own the sky-landscape and appear built of solid moonlight! See that once and bear the sweet and blessed memory into eternity. It is all rapture.

A church spire affects me as nothing else in architecture has the grace to do. It overshadows my heart, my imagination, my life. It has already passed into the chief poetry of landscape. Whoever has learned to love Birket Foster's illustra-

tions as I have will recall how continuously the church tower and spire invade his landscapes. As the great Turner was wont to flash on high his cathedral through his Turnerian landscape as his "Rivers of France" so often do, so Birket Foster hangs the star of his church spire above a stretch of heath or hill or woodland. A scene going sylvan-wise no one knows whither is almost certain to have a spire on its distance touching into mellow poetry the world of human hearts which cluster about a little church.

I have noted the effect of cattle on a landscape as I have traversed the thousands on thousands of miles of this Land of my Love and have found them gifting the scene with quiet as no other animals do—and have found my mind in quest of their secret. They have in them a rest, a rumination, unknown to others, yet is that not all the history of why they infect a scene as sheep nor horses can do. They are an appanage of home. Cattle mean folks and house and evening. Wherever they pastured they incline to wend their way homeward at night by zigzag paths, as rooks from their far foraging by daylight row with black oars their black barges across the sunset sky into their rookery until they seem the world's good-night to the sunset. Cattle with zigzag path of following feet and with the tankle of the cowbell take their slow but certain path homeward when the shadows lengthen and the gloaming nears. Cattle are knit into the human story. Their deep

though unseeing eyes have mutely watched our earthly dwellings. Not knowing that they do, they feel humanity. And where they feed or lie ruminating the human interest of them distills upon the scene. They quiet the landscape. They hush the babbling of the stream. It tends to be still water because of them. Wherever they pasture or lie at rest at panting noon they suggest the invisible inhabitants at whose gates they will lie down at night and await the dawn. There is something haunting and half pathetic to note, what I have often noted, how the cattle will, if they may not reach the near neighborhood of the house which they count home, at least gather and sleep at the nearest point thereto they may approach. I have seen this so often as I have driven long distances through the dark. They want human companionship, and their presence does not disturb the slumbers even of such as lightly sleep.

In some way like this, and different from this, a church steeple is such a homely, human thing, and the spire such a lovely and blessed thing. Old-World cathedrals stand strong as a mountain in the midst of city squalor and wrangle of petty trade and barter and stridency of voices, and calmly sweep upward into the ineffable sky where stars take their shining but momentous way. The cathedral is God's house even as it is man's house. They own it together. It is man's house and it is God's house too. It invades the city with the

presence of God and suggests and inspires and imposes his presence on the God's Acre lying near. For God's Acre is in the Cathedral's shadow. God is the God of men. He is a lonesome God without folks. He is a happy God with folks.

It is well to catch the heaven-breath of the church, little or large. Life clusters about its base and eternal life clusters about its spire. Those little churches of England, which nestle into the landscape like a babe on the breast, all connote worship and praise and help and rest, and the nearness of God to man and the nearness and access of man to God. There is no other thought so high. To them the pathways lead across many a stile and field and beside many a gentle brook and in the shadow of many a hedgerow spilled full of skylark's ecstasy. All the pathways converge to the little mossgrown church and, having reached that haven, rest. The church is so little, yet so large. Lake Windermere is not so compelling to one's memory as the little Wordsworth church, a wee bit housie where nature-poet Wordsworth bowed his head in prayer. Not a vast cathedral, with the shadow of its tower thrown in the haunting river, impresses me more nor gives more the sense of the great God. A least church with its tiny spire or tower has all the mystery of human trust and longing, and God to be had for the asking. Birket Foster loves the meadow, the sheep field and the sheep fold, the blithe water, the cottage rose-embowered, the

goodman at the stile or porch, the hay making, the sundown, the lonely river, the boats waiting for the fishermen and the tide, the lone fisherman in the lonely boat on the darkening water, and all places of human love and longing and rejoicing and grieving; and there the church is set. He loves to place it there. In that sweet domestic scene, so human and so sturdy and so tender, the church spire roots like a climbing pine, but roots in the earth of the human instincts and social solidarity which must climb to God or be desolate, like a rack of wind-blown clouds over a great water. A church spire has its spiritual appeal which was bound to catch a poet-painter like Birket Foster. He has not misadventured in his art. His artist genius rings clear as a church bell among the starry spaces of a summer night. I have adduced this artist because his hands painted the poetry of things and folks, and because more continuously and more certainly than anyone I know Birket Foster has felt this phase of landscape and has let it bloom like a flower where he passed. I authenticate my mood by him although I need not his authentication. It stands in its own right. I will trust my own soul in these heavenly matters. They require no certificate of character.

At the writing of this essay the writer is a dweller in an apartment six floors up. This altitude gives a view, at the east end, of a huge cathedral, lovelier seen afar and aloft than on the ground and near at hand. Thus seen a lordly

dome springs on high and two spires controvert man's mortality. As the night falls it is restful to the spirit to sit and consider the spectacle of praise and prayer. The calm of the place seems to hush the tempest of the surging city, though the dome does not move my spirit as a spire—even the domes of Saint Peter's at Rome and Saint Paul's in London. I am melted in spirit by the spire. There is spaciousness in a dome, but for me it does not touch the soul as the climb of the tower or the spring skyward of a spire. That, of course, is a matter of individual feeling and has no logic, any more than a kiss or a sigh or a prayer. From the other end of our sky dwelling we see one tower and two spires. They haunt me with a holy haunting which is the very presence of poetry. I watch for them at the pale gray of morning, at the white light of noon, in smoky skies with dim-seen landscape, in the rush and riot of sunset splendors, and in the palpitant moments which rush past as the day kisses the world good-by. I fear I spend more time than is allotted a busy man in considering these prepossessions to prayer. They look mutely down on the city, yet not as despising it, but weeping over it, praying for it, dreaming the dreams a city should dream for itself, but is a little remiss in dreaming, or, deeper, totally remiss in dreaming. As I look at them from a distance and from their levels they seem strangely alone in their aspiration, loving the city below and dwelling above,

and their holding as with hot hands of love and longing the hurly-burly, careless, sinful city toward the breast of God. It is a goodly sight of which I never tire. It rests me when I am weary and chimes to me though no bell rings from their silent chambers. And from one window, on a hilltop which ends the scene, is a spire—one, just one, and that one enough. Skyscrapers are on that hill, and the city lying beneath is packed with habitations and voices of to-day. That one solitary yet unlonely spire submerges them all. It is so airy, so ethereal, so built by the hands of prayer. It so spurts like the lift of some celestial frontier, is so rapt and away like a saint in ecstasy with God that it does with me as it will. I sit and watch it. I stand and watch it. I watch it when morning rises behind it (for the spire is in the east), and the morning mantles it with flame, with the glorious crimson of sunrise: I watch it when noon catches its breath from its long climb up the sky: I watch it mid-afternoon when the sunrays slant, like long-flight arrows shot by a strong flying angel of the Lord: I watch it when day staggers like a wounded soldier and falters into its fatal slumber: I watch it when the stars begin to peer from the heavenly doorways: watch it, and sometimes fall asleep with its minstrelsy of heaven harping in my heart and wake to look from the window and thank God it is still there.

In Long Island is a little Methodist church which for spire loveliness and unspoken call to

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God is worth traveling from sea to sea to glance upon but once; to look up, and then, seeing, wear the white wonder of the pointing finger of God away in the heart forever. The day I saw it there was a gray sea mist pattering now and then in rain. The east wind was blowing. A friend whose heart was lonely by the going of the wife of his love before him to the city of God was taking me about. The east wind of tears was blowing on his heart and eyes. We were on the way to the sea to hear the Atlantic billows beat against the sands and behold the sea intrude through gray-brown sea marshes on the land. Thus as we spoke of holy and heavenly things, and lands where partings do not kiss blind lips nor voices choke with grief, this church spire swam into our sky as if an angel came. It fairly took my breath, so swift an apparition it was and heavenly. The church was diminutive and meek in a little town but blooming with the alacrity and delight of a flower skyward, toward the land of which my friend and I had been discoursing. The church spire pointed exultant as the angel spake, clad in white raiment, sitting on the stone he had rolled from the sepulcher of God, crying like a trumpet, "He is arisen, He is not here, not here, arisen, arisen," and his voice was like the chiming of inimitable bells. Ah! little spire hard by the sea, you shall stand preeminent in the foreground of my heart what time I weep and sorely need to pray.

In Providence, Rhode Island, the long-ago worshipers, followers of Roger Williams, built a meetinghouse of wood and built a thing of dream, pure dream. Such as think themselves to know, and who love such things and may speak with some authority, count this place of prayer the most perfect bit of ecclesiastical architecture in America. Maybe so. I will not argue with them. I could not dispute it. It seems as if it rightfully might be that. I should wish it might be, as a tribute to the pure artistry of those early American worshipers of God in a church out from the control of state. The building is pure white, as of unblemished marble, and seems as avid as a bird to spring into the sky, with its high white visionary spire, a creature of pure light, holding on high to there meditate on heavenly things.

Once I was a pastor of Independence Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church in Kansas City, Missouri. The building is pure and courageous Gothic. The portal is a-bloom with lilies, the Easter lilies of the Lord, as if it were one lily bloom, to invite the Christ walking on the street to come in and tarry there till his weary feet were rested a little. The main spire is a glorious spring toward God. It is most visible of all that city holds, standing higher, seeing farther. How I used to love it, watching it in the dark up against the background of stars and a thing of kinship with the risings of the sun. I was its minister—nay, rather did it minister to me. The

lightning smote it thrice, pressed its kiss of fire upon its outstretched wings. No matter, sunrise kissed it too, and glorious morning and sunset skies, and it shined aloft like Ithuriel's spear.

In Baltimore are two spires of special significance to a wistful spirit. One, on Mount Vernon Place Methodist Episcopal Church, which but for the spire of the First Presbyterian Church would have been imperial. It has its calm and cloud against the sky. The other spire balms the spirit. From a hospital I saw it best and first—from a hospital where pain was prevalent and death was busy. There I saw the spire spring—and against a sunset sky—and was filled with transfiguration. O! it was glorious and effectual, like a tryst with God.

Hennepin Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, springs from its central roof with never a thing anywhere in the architecture to detract from it; a single spire for which no words can offer incense. It seems slight as a child's finger, frail as a moonbeam, but will prove lasting as the world and haunting as a hymn sung by martyrs about to press the lips of death. You must see it for your heart's delight and be requited for your quest.

In Washington, the capital city of the Land of Dreams, is a spire of the Metropolitan Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church. It is set near the Capitol, with its great dome and its magnificent bulk. It is in fair stone's throw of that noblest

obelisk in the whole world, Washington Monument. It is neighbor to many buildings of the government which challenge admiration for their simple and noble proportions. It is hard by the Library of Congress, that housing-place of a nation's literature and rendezvous of the students of our hemisphere. In such surroundings what should a church do but cower in ineffectual humiliation? It has what none of these massive edifices of legislation, knowledge, administration possess: it has a spire. That church house is an explanation of the existence of all these. The Church of God begot this American scene and civilization. The church is the sweet, diminutive mother of these sturdy sons. America is a Christian civilization or it is no civilization at all. And this church sends up its spire at once alluring, unique, and majestic. How my heart thrills to it as to a mountain peak at morning! It inspires the scene. The dome of the Capitol hangs aloft, fixed, finished, but the spire seeks a flight into the sky and the flight just begun. It is transcendent. No terminus, just a lift of wing for a far flight begun and the end of the flight behind all the stars into that morning which breaks but never sets. The spire's flight of aspiration is over to where God stays.

I know a village tree-embowered. It has a railroad station, a grocery store, a blacksmith shop, a post office, and a grange hall. I think a half dozen would make an abundant count of the

houses. And a church is there, and across the street the manse. You may never see the church, as the train tarries in the station or passes puffingly through the town. But a spire tops the town. I look forward to seeing it as I gaze at a flight of doves white-breasted, white-winged, swift of flight against the fury of a gale. Such a modest spire among the trees, yet so haunting, so ministrant, so silent yet singingly vocal in its evangel. "Here we pray, we mortal folk, trust in God, love him, and listen to and heed the preacher's words, and repent us of our sins, and trust in God for our salvation, and make our slow sure way to the Better Land," so says the spire. I pass by many a brave metropolis overgrown with cares and business success with a casual glance and forget the name and the features of the city; but a hurried travel-glance on this holy hortation of this little spire in this little town, springing above the treetops as to invite the trees to cast their passing incense to the winds in love of the Christ who planted the trees of the field and prayed beneath their shadows. Many cities I pass through and forget. This little town of the White Spire I shall not forget while I live. To my own soul I have christened it "The Village of the Spire." Stars, shed starlight softly, lest ye disturb its holy meditation on the things of God. My Village of the Spire, good night! Sweet dreams and good night, a hushed and hallowed good night.

A single spire colors an entire field of land and

sky as a sunrise does, flooding all below and far up and back behind things with the pure white flame of the spire not kindled on the ground. It is spilled through the sky, not from it, and from a sun which is hidden from our eyes, yet, unseen, empties glory on the clouds. This shining light reports God to us, sets God down on us like a heaven of heavens.

And a spire at night. How shall I explicate that mystery of spirit when starlight or moonlight inverts its urn and spills all its magical luminosity out on the dark, turning it into an enchanted land? The church spire soars to meet that mystical light as if it were itself a shaft of light—yet not falling down from the sky but leaping ecstatically into heaven; and earth becomes in it a luminary in its own right, lifting itself on high as a shaft of shadowy glory. One fears that the flight of a night moth might shatter it. Howbeit not the shock of an earthquake nor the crash of worlds can dissipate that insinuative glory. A thing of earth it is and a thing of heaven.

And I ruminate seeing a spire sweep past which I see from the rushing train. A flash like a sea gull's wing, with a blue sky above and blue below, and a church spire to record that there behind was a valley where the weary rested, and by day and night the parents of little children prayed that, waking or sleeping, their children might be the Lord's, and where God was no stranger to those village folks, but came their way and tarried

at their house and in it. A rush of a train, a flash of white spire; and I heard a multitude of angels sing, and my face was fanned by the perfumed breath of angel wings set blowing on my heart.

I know a little village scarcely bigger than a bunch of hollyhocks, and a spire is there. And though I have seen it times now counting into hundreds I watch for it like weary ones watch for morning, or as I watch for a face I love. I would travel that way with no other reason than to catch my passing glance of that spirit of inspiration and the voice of that visible prayer. The village, the spire said, was God's. The village wants God, and the spire made that affirmation visible and audible. I hear their choir chanting with subdued voice, and I feel the village heart singing "My Father and my God." This is a kindly thing, a tenderly human thing, an earthly-heavenly thing. For our God is a homely yet heavenly Father for homely folks. He never passes our little interests by, assiduous as he is orbiting the stars. He nestles us on his breast and fondles those that be motherless and hushes the weary and the sick among us to slumber with his balm and energizes our activities with the inflow of his energy. "Human the church is and divine": and so are we. So saith the spire.

And in the dusk to walk a country road whose only lamp is stars, and on a road whose dust is lately laid by the kindly passing of a shower, and while the flush slowly and surely falters from the sky how sweet it is in surprise to come upon the

spire of a country church standing unlonely in its loneliness, passing lordly in its solitude and simplicity! Where are the country folk who worship here? I see afar a kindly lit lamp which soon blows out, for they are weary and seek rest. But the church spire seems to keep watch, as to say, "I will be your watchman," and through the crickets' chir and those insistent and delicious voices of the night I seem to hear, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace." It is the spire whispering. The Lord who tucks the birdie's head beneath its wing and bids it be unafraid is here. Birds are they whose nest is the heart of God. I will dream on this country road, and while I dream in the presence of the church spire I will pray.

I watch for the spires, that is the sum of it. I set them down among my beatitudes. On some dreamy evening when my slow heart pulse ticks out the closing minutes of my life's little day upon the ground I feel assured that I shall see with dimming eyes, in that dimming dusk, a church spire climbing out of my evening dust against the background of the dull night sky and pointing like a smile of God to that fair city where I shall have my certain welcome from Him whose name the church spire half whispered and half sang to me in voice of love through all my yearning years and shall chime to me, a pilgrim welcome home.

In one of the divine pictures of the great Turner

rises a white church tower high above the heights of the city there, and high above the actual height of that cathedral tower as seen by the eyes of casual travelers, but not as seen by the eyes of that astonishing artist. It stands very high, and white as a sheaf of light, "like the finger of God," to use that haunting phrase that slipped from the lips of him who knew more about God than all men that have ever lived. 'Is not this the finger of God?" said he. That shaft of light dominates the scene and flings as by compulsion all about it into diminutive shadow. This picture is a parable of every cathedral and every little church anywhere. It is light and leading, and shines away the shadows and lets in the Light of Lights eternal.

A spire softens the landscape, gives it an Inness effect, soothes the scene, shuts out the glare, and in its place brings a purple dusk where meditation may fold its hands and courage knit up its "raveled sleave of care" (Thank you, Will Shakespeare!) and God comes softly, not as the Great Intruder, but as the best Friend life ever knows; and his touch on the heart is the beatitude of our time and our eternity.

And then, the music! The church towers and spires are nests of melody. The heavenly songs sing from these uplands in the skies. No one can catch a word cunning enough in beauty to contain or even suggest the minstrelsy of bells. No church should be without them. The angels who sang that sweet night in the skies were the forerunners

of the church bells of the whole Christian world. The cunning poetry of that singing episode of the gospel caught the heart of the lovers of the Christ, and they saw that there should be aloft the singing in the night and day. In cathedral and church are instruments of music. There the organ holds forth like the instrumentation of the sea: there sits the dreamer of the keys. Music becometh God's house. That is a truism of the faith once delivered to the saints. Where Christ is there is melody. "Making melody in your heart unto God," said the radiant apostle, knowing full well that when the music is there it drips down on all the rooms of life. We have the melody. We have caught the song. No silence is possible when once the Everlasting Melody has caught us by the hand and by the heart. The logic of this beautiful obsession, this transcendent occupation, must work itself out. There is no stopping it. How well we know that, if we watch the procession of those poets who have had the Minstrel make their heart his home! So in the church are the choir, and the organ, and the trumpet, and all such things of lip or finger which swing out into the air the vibrant ecstasies of the heart. A church is a house of the heart; and what things become a heart become a church. Love becomes the heart and song springs out of love as rainbows out of rain and dayspring out of the arisen sun. A singing heart and a singing church are what the chiming bells declare. So when a body sees a church spire there is the mute

sense of minstrelsy and all high hope that flowers in song.

Waiting for a train in a village as night was coming on, and walking to and fro to catch the air upon my face, I marked near the railroad a little church, small to the dimension of minuteness, and it had been invisible to me but for the finger of a spire. Whoever had built the spire had scant skill in the doing of it. It was a lamentable architectural achievement, while as a spiritual attitude and expression it cleansed my thought and fancy, and hallowed my spirit, and took me by the hand and led me to prayer. I knew it was a church, that little edifice. I knew that there hungry hearts prayed, that there on sunny and cloudy days, in days of storm and wild blowing of the wind and swirling of snows, people trudged to the house of rest and the house of God, and that on days blest with sunshine and fragrant with summer and the ripening of the wheat thither came blithely men and women and little children with many quips of laughter and dancing feet. They all came to the house of God. I saw all that and felt it more than by seeing it with my physical eyes. Indeed, I did not need to see it physically, for the church house and the church spire wrought upon my spirit so that for the moment I needed physical sight no more than did the great blind Milton. And as the day darkened, and the darkness deepened and the night lights began to blaze indoors and out, the steeple spoke: the bell began

to ring. Truly it was a bell which could have taken no credit for its voice. It was a pitiful falsetto. Music was a thing of which it could not in any veracity have been accused. All this I knew. I am not quite color-blind to melody. I love the dulcet note of bird voices in mating time, and mother voices singing babes to sleep at twilight, and great congregations in the swell and ecstasy of sacred hymnody. No, I am not quite inexpert myself in melody—having not sung lustily myself and so having listened while others sang. Yet to my spirituality that trivial bell in its trivial misshapen steeple, ringing out in unmelodious tones across the little town, discoursed great music like the swelling sea. It rang out the tune called "God with us," I, myself, singing with unmelodious voice but from a heart at love with him and his mankind and mine. To my ears the inconsequent ringing of the bell set all the bells in my spirit ringing and all the holy tunes were on my lips which my words cannot express. Hearts that know the holy Christ, in reverent singing, though by lips and voices which cannot express what their hearts know, to me far surpass all the melody of trained voices with all finesse of harmony. The heart has a sweeter hymn book than any voice may hope to express. Any mother singing to her child, any man humming to himself some heavenly air because his heart has learned a hymn, moves me as all your Carusos with their operatic sound and fury are incompetent to do. O, little

church, in little hamlet, with your funny little steeple and its ridiculously untuned bell, you seem sonorous to me, like the dream-call of great winds in great pines, only you enunciate the words the pines cannot form their lips to. Through you I hear the angels singing and the sons of God.

So many things I hear and heed not. They leave no impress on my larger self. They do not even make a raindrop print on the dry dust of my spirit. So many voices I hear and wish them hushed, and when they become mute I make my praises. Not so with the sacred chimes of this untuned bell in its hint of a steeple. Not so. It was trying to chant the call to prayer and the invitation to hurried folk, who must some time die, to come and wait upon the Lord. Ah! no thunder in the bleak skies, nor up-climb of great mountains, has known to do with my spirit what this church bell in its trivial tower has done. And now, far away from that scene and falling darkness, it all comes back to me: the little timorous bell and its little spire, in its little town and with its unknown folk, I class it among the great minstrels within my soul.

What a beautiful thing it is to install chimes in a church tower in the name of some man or some woman who when alive made music in the world by being and seeing and doing things which overbear people's doubts and fears and waverings and turn their lives into heavenly chiming. I should love to have a church tower or church steeple

and a carillon of bells named after me. That seems to me the very radiancy of ministry; that is "to make undying music in the world," and being dead yet to speak, and being voiceless yet to sing. It is to make undying music in the world in a roomier fashion than George Eliot intended when she penned that fine line. The carillon, which through the years and centuries of years in dusk or day, in stress or storm, in sea mist, in the witless wind, on the wide moor, where prairies stretch away to meet the skies, in remote valleys where the cattle sleep, by silent flowing rivers or by the adventurous sea to hail the ships that pass their headlands, wherever they ring, all who go that way know that the Lord is calling, and the carillons are the songsters of the heavenlies and singing, "This way lieth peace."

Often have I in some strange or familiar vicinity, when birds were calling their last good-night with sleepy voices and children's voices were growing mute, when the dusk hushed all to hear the starlight speak and listen to the footfall of the dew, there when the voices of the world would be a sure intrusion, often have I heard the calling of a mellow bell across the approaching dark. I could have heard the footfall of the dew and the eloquence of stars; and the church bells did not disturb nor intrude on that sacred silence. They melted into the mood of the coming night. The whisper of the Lord became by them the more articulate. They gently push all holy suggestions

through the open or half-open door of the spirit. They bathe the landscape in a celestial comfort. They break upon the heart a box of ointment of spikenard, very precious, whose odors fill every room of the heart. On such a landscape, strange in every feature or very familiar so I could wander through the dark and not go astray, when the church bell lifts its hallowed voice I feel restfully at home. I am not far from my own hearth but wandering dreamfully toward it.

I know a little town embowered in trees, haunted by the happiest memories of my life, where I have often gone loiteringly beyond the habitations so as to be out of sight, but not out of sound, when the church bell should awaken from its slumber of the day and give its angel music to the dark. The fathomless peace of the deep-throated music eclipses the peace of the stars and the solemn arch of the sky. I walk as about to invade eternity. I have a friend. He now lives with God behind the morning, in a deeper morning. If any suggest that I should say I had a friend I must denominate his suggestion a blind saying. I have a friend just as when he was fellow traveler with me among the mountains where we used to go and wander among mountaintops and stars with vagrant delight. A dear friend of my friend and me wrote, "At eleven o'clock Saturday night our dear friend was not, for God took him. He went away in his sleep," and then this friend signed himself, "Faithfully yours, in hope of life everlasting," then appended:

"They rest from their labors." How shall I account such a friend as stepping into the past tense of my heart? He is, I am, and we live. I have my feet, he has his wings, and we journey in the same direction, with the same light upon the path. It is such talk the church bells make across the landscape of the dusk. I feel the unity and persistency and permanency of life, and the nearness of the far and the neighborliness of my immortal life; and life mortal and life eternal shake hands in the church spire. When the bell sings out earth and heaven are but one landscape, and across it all shines the amazing radiancy of the smile of God.

Haec fabula docet: Let every church have a spire, and every spire a bell!

Ring on, ye gold-throat bells, and bathe the quiet sky with minstrelsy and billow across God's Acre, where the happy dead in the Lord rest from their labors and their works do follow them—aye, and precede them. Poe's "Bells" are clamorous discords compared with the hush-melody of church bells which from church spires distills like dew upon the dusk and through the dusk upon the heart. Sing on, O holy chimes, nor silence ye till Time shall make its adieu and Eternity shall come in with its ringing of the bells of heaven.

XVI

A BUNCH OF WILD FLOWERS

They Wait for Me

They wait for me in distant lands,
  That fellowship exceeding sweet,
And reach toward me exultant hands
  And with glad smiles my coming greet.

Of that dear throng, some have I known
  To greatly love along my way,
And they have happy memories thrown
  Round many a lovely yesterday.

Their faces are so fair to see,
  So lovely to my heart's best dream,
That with them I could gladly be
  By shadowed path or sunny stream.

I long for them; they long for me;
  The way grows weary for their looks,
Their voices are my minstrelsy,
  Their faces are my winsome books.

They wait for me, those blessed folk,
  Whom in God's grace my voice has reached
And words of mine did them invoke
  What time they listened to me preach.

They wait for me whom I knew not;
  But on the way I fared along
My outstretched hand their hand had caught
  Amidst the many of the throng.

They wait for me, my loved and lost,
  In whose departure I am sad,
Whose gravestones with the years are mossed,
  Whose dying left a lonesome lad.

I see a woman's radiant face,
  And crowned with hair of billowy gold,
I know her by her tender grace,
  My mother love no tongue hath told.

I see a man with steady gaze,
  Bronzed with sea-breath and prairie wind,
Who walks with God the pleasant ways
  And calls "My boy!" with accents kind.

I see unnumbered faces where
  A heaven of welcome shines for me,
Nor any line of pain or care
  Is on their sweet tranquillity.

They wait for me. Toward them I walk
  With hesitant or hasting feet.
I shall join in their heavenly talk
  And with them shall our Master meet.

My years are there: my days are here.
Bright days that speed like hasting wind;
But yon infinitude of cheer
Shall leave these radiant days behind.

They wait for me, my friends in God!
My place of rest is in their heart.
What time soe'er I walk abroad
Toward them I walk to never part.

Skirting the Dawn I Saw a River Fair

Skirting the dawn I saw a river fair,
Far-wandering and very full of light,
Where every ripple ran with wonder bright,
And all the river lay with bosom bare
And smiled, so radiant and free from care;
And all the banks with grasses green were light.
The river shimmered in a deep delight
When morning whitened ere the world was ware.
Fade not, sweet river, in a gloom of night.
Wind on and on along the shining plain.
Take shadows of the grasses on thy brink
And golden fleece of clouds in happy flight
And the low-flying swallows come again
And soft-eyed cattle come to thee to drink.

How Still Thou Art, O Quiet of the Dark!

How still thou art, O quiet of the dark!
The birds are nested under mother-wings,
And hushed is every daylight voice that sings,
And mute as a dead voice the meadow lark.

Caught by the hands of dreams I dimly mark
  The spacious quiet. Spiritual things
  Crowd on me dimly like the hush of wings
As I do slowly on the night embark.
I grow ethereal as the upper skies;
  I grow august as souls at judgment seat:
I grow supreme like daylight in the east:
I hush my spirit to the wide surmise
  Of what I am and where my weary feet
Shall fare when I am from the night released.

The Songs

What is the song thou singest, Bird,
  A-sway on the tossing grass?
Thy song has never a lonely word,
  But gleeful as winds that pass.

What is the song thou singest, Brook,
  Beneath thy dusk of pines?
Thine eyes have such a dreamy look,
  Thy lips chant haunting lines.

What is the song thou singest, Heart,
  Where tears and laughters swim?
Like eyes of lovers that meet and part
  When hearts are full to the brim.

Hush, Hush; Why Weepest Thou?

Hush, hush; why weepest thou?
  The day is brief.
Thou hast so little while—
  Why nurture grief?

The dusk is on thy track,
And, like a thief,
Will in a moment hence
Steal flower and leaf.

Wherefore, I bid thee smile:
Give laughter room
That in thy little while
Life should have bloom.

A Song

Blow, Happy Wind, about my heart,
Thou art so dear to me.
Blow, Happy Wind, and be a part
Of my heart's minstrelsy.

Blow, Happy Wind, and in thy voice
Twine lark and bluebird songs,
To make my happy heart rejoice.
For thee my being longs.

Blow, blow, I would not have thee cease,
Thou ecstasy like wine;
Blow, blow with swift and strange increase—
Thy lyrics all are mine.

If blow thou wilt, my heart shall sing
Some song it did not know,
And in my heart like bluebird's wing,
Unwithering violets grow.

Blow on, blow on, O Happy Wind.

Break Forth Into Fire

Break forth into fire, Dim East!
The night is spent.
Where stars were sprent
Is now of them releast.

Break forth into fire, Gray Dawn!
Nor shade thine eyes
With wild surprise
That darkness is withdrawn.

Break forth into fire, Blue Sky!
Thy pallor sweet
For star-rise meet
Must vanish like a sigh.

Break forth into fire, Daybreak!
While flocks and herds
And babes and birds
At thy wild torch awake.

If God Shall Lift Me from the Frozen Ground

If God shall lift me from the frozen ground
Where I, a winter pilgrim, prostrate lie,
And frost and famine do my strength defy,
And where, swoon-caught as slain, he hath me found,

Sunk in a stupor where no clangorous sound
  Could make me heed my heavenly destiny
  Or any kindly greeting make, or cry
In swift response, nor any voice astound;
So, then, if the Almighty God shall lift
  Me up with generous strength immixed with pain,
And set me on my stumbling, inert feet,
Shall not I count his help my shoreless gift,
  And reckon love to be my mainmost gain,
And grow a crop of love like golden wheat?

Great Silent Captain

Ulysses S. Grant

What has the silence of sagacious years
Wrought with thy fame, when thundering guns have hushed
Their plaintive and tremendous minstrelsy,
Great silent captain of the bearded face
And armed hand and unalarmed look?
The battle glamor faded, art thou come
To march amongst the ranks of little men
To which the happy crowd of life belongs
And where thou wouldst be glad to come and stay?
Was war a flaming torch to lift aloft
And when the torch is out the face is lost?
In that innumerable company
To which most fame must bring itself at length
Art thou a guest? and doth thy shadow stand

A lessened majesty? Are we bereft
Of our great chieftain whom the Nation loved
To praise? Is thy flame vanished like a torch
Burnt out? Are those who loved to slur thy name
Come conquerors? Or have their voices died
away
To silence as was their desert? What, ho!
Who walks across the windy spaces wide
With springing step and mighty martial tread,
And tireless as the rise and fall of tides,
Triumphant as the advent of the dawn,
All red and gold, his silent sword at sheath,
His gentle eyes unamorous of war,
His silent lips apart and making speech
And with an eloquence outsounding swords
And diapason of the cannon's roar?
"Let us have peace." Not cannon's hot-throat
words
Have right of way across majestic years
Like those strange words of peace from warrior lips.
They leap like swords—not counsel but command.
They clang and charge and march across the
world,
The battle mooded mandate for a peace
As wide as landscape shined on by the flag.
Great Silent Captain, whose discourse has set
A banner in the sky which every wind
Flings far and every eye beholds and voice
Applauds. This man of mighty war becomes
The orator of peace. The rusted guns
Are still: the swords seek everlasting sheath.

And peace each morning plucks a dewy wreath
Wherewith to bind the Silent Captain's brow;
And Death for aye like shout of seas calls loud,
"He gave the countersign, let him march past."

A House Not Made With Hands

"A house not made with hands"—
  O clinging phrase and sweet—
Apart in summer lands,
  Where those, long parted, meet.

Where woe and haste are dead,
  And homelessness is past,
Where nothing dwells to dread
  And all things worth-while last.

Here, hands with toil are hard,
  And then built but a tent,
Which we must soon discard
  And which storm winds have rent.

But yon in that dear land
  A house for souls at rest,
Where weary brows are fanned
  With winds from out God's west.

The Port of Ships

I know not where the drift of seas
  Shall bring my little boat to land,
Nor from what compass-point the breeze
  Which wafts me toward a hidden strand.

But well I know that where I sail
  Is toward the Harbor of the Sky,
And that I surely shall not fail
  To make that haven by and by.

My pact with God is ever this—
  To keep upon the waters wide
When wave and wind shall bravely kiss
  My craft I shall be satisfied.

By wild winds blown and gruff waves tossed,
  What is that stormy waste to me
Who cannot in their storms be lost,
  Whose rest is in Infinity?

Some time my boat, at port afar
  Where crowd the ships from many seas,
Shall safe within that harbor bar
  A respite find, and song, and ease.

O Port of Ships, O Golden Strand,
  O wistful haven far away,
My bark rocks toward thy sun-drenched land
  To cast glad anchor in that bay.

Blow, Heavenly Breath

Blow, heavenly breath,
  Nor cease, nor cease,
And banish death.
  Blow peace, blow peace.

Blow, holy wind,
  By night, by day,
And violets find
  On hidden way.

Blow, Spirit sweet,
  With endless Spring.
Blow, fleet; blow, fleet,
  On heavenly wing.

Blow wild as storm,
  Blow kind as calm.
Bring earth reform
  And night and balm.

Blow, Spirit strong,
  Till winters cease
For hearts that long
  For summer peace.

Across my soul
  Snowbound and chill,
Like night skies roll
  And blow and thrill.

Blow, Holy Ghost,
  Exceeding strong,
Unto that coast
  Where I belong.

Blow, ever blow
  Thy minstrelsy.
While ages go,
  Blow endlessly.

Thy blowing breath,
  Thy heartening,
Now wandereth
  Like wild birds' wing,

Across my skies,
  Across my ground,
Like stars that rise,
  Like flutes that sound.

Blow, breath eterne,
  Nor haste, nor rest
Until I yearn
  Unto thy breast.

Blow like the breath
  From off the sea
That hearteneth—
  Blow over me.

A Journeyer

The bank with violets was blue;
  The blue sky sprang its arch aloft!
The bluebird called "Bermuda" to
  The lifting hill and leaning croft.

Blue was the dim and distant hill,
  And blue the dim and distant sea
To which in singing haste the rill
  Would come in due time tranquilly.

And blue the eyes of one I knew
  Who fared across from sea to hill,
Sweet as the wind at evening dew
  And mournful as the whip-poor-will.

And in some blue of boundless sky
  Him shall I find in spaces far
Where radiant spirits do not die,
  But tireless dwell as angels are.

A Battle Cry

O lave me be,
  Ye checkered years—
Wance had I glee,
  Now tears, all tears.

Now lave me be.
  I had my rest
So swift and free
  Upon his breast.
Who lieth dead
  I know not where.
And flowers are fed
  And beauties wear
From his dead breast
  On which I lay
Supremely glad
  On yesterday.

O lave me, lave
  To my despair,
To vanished dreams
  That once were fair.

No light now gleams
From my lone grave.

So far to go
  And go alone!
The south winds blow
  As they have blown
And bring but woe.
  Ah, lave me be,
Mayhap I'll die
  And flee, and flee
To thee, dear bye.

And Trouble Faileth in a Sweet Content

When all the night is lamped with stars besprent
  Along its every devious avenue
  On those far spaces where the winds that blew
Made the stars blink almost to languishment,
And all the solemn darkness broods with bent
  And studious forehead; and, like drops of dew,
  The stars shine the untedious darkness through
And trouble faileth in a sweet content.

Then Soul hath room to tiptoe to the height
  Of scathless altitudes. Its bitter stress
Abated for a breath, it stands serene
And garbs its majesty in stellar light
  Disrobes itself of earthly bitterness
And claims its kinship to the vast unseen.

Just to Be With the World of Things and Men

Just to be with the world of things and men,
The night smells, and the streams that sleep
and wake,
The prairies, and the mountaintops that take
The thousand mornings to their heart and then
Are yearning for a thousand more. The glen
Where droop the solemn pines and aspens quake,
And gentle herds at hot noon meekly slake
Their thirst at bubbling streams and browse again.
The sleepy noon, the restful nights which share
The mystery of death and time and space,
The kisses of the lips of love, the mist
Along the streams, the cornshocks and the flare
Of prairie-fires at night, the tideless grace
Which never sears while love and earth hold tryst.

The Martyr's Answer

"What recompense have I?" I hear thee ask,
Although my ears are dimmed a little, since
Oft partial martyrdoms have made me wince
And seared my faculties. The martyr-task
Is not an easy yoke. The crimson flask
Of fire oft times have I drunk of to rinse
Down bitterness of other sort. My Prince
Was crucified. I fain would wear His mask.
What recompense have I, a martyr maimed,
Whose flesh is torn with lions' teeth and claws,
To whom one other heart-leap brings the end?

All recompense! A Master not ashamed
To love me and to take me when life draws
Near night and say, "Brave heart, stout heart,
good friend."

Soul, Try Once More

They broke my sword across their knee
And shouted, "Coward" far and near
Because I fled as cowards flee
To shun the battle and its fear.

I slunk into the ranks unknown:
My weapon was my broken sword.
I heard the tune of battle blown:
I climbed the hill with death-shot scored.

With trembling knees and ashen face
My half-sword multiplied its blows
And hacked away my dull disgrace
Until the cry of "Hero" rose.

The Port of Days

The sudden glory wastes:
The day is spent.
The eager darkness hastes.
My desert tent

Is hushed and spectral white:
The huge stars blaze.
Swift falls the dreamful night,
The Port of Days.

The glory clouds. The winds
  Come wistfully,
A shoreless patience finds
  My tent and me.

One glory fades away;
  Another dawns,
Night floats into the day
  Like silent swans.

And wonder lights a torch
  To drown its light,
Beyond the desert's scorch
  In star-sprent night.

From sun to sun we climb
  Through night and gloom,
From reckless Winter's prime
  To Spring and bloom.

All Day with God

One word with Thee is conquest;
  One touch of Thee is calm.
The radiance of Thy presence
  Makes all my day a psalm.

To hear Thee in the morning
  Say, "Welcome to this Day,"
Makes all my deeds of service
  A happy holiday.

To hear Thee in the noontide
  Say, "Break thou bread with me,"
Doth change my daily hunger
  To sacrament with Thee.

To hear Thy voice at evening
  Say, "Tired child, take rest,"
Is better than the moonlight,
  Or gentle mother breast.

Thus every day is comfort
  When spent, my Lord, with Thee.
And every step is onward:
  And all's all well with me.

When Anger Faileth Through Sheer Lack of Strength

When anger fails me and lips passionate
  Emit no more wild words like leaping swords
  To rush with turbulence as ruthless hordes
In deep despite of right with burning hate
To ravage and destroy, cooperate
  For any evil, no emollient words
  Nor any hasting blood-drenched sword affords
A hint at recompense until too late.
When anger faileth through sheer lack of strength
But hate bides still, though frozen, in the breast
  And bleak soul darkens grimly to the night
Of death, when all is past and life at length
Hath only sullen sunset in the west,
  What chance hath such a darkness for the light?

A Day to Dream of

A day to dream of and to speak
  Its happy fame in paradise,
Where never any day is bleak
  Nor laughters fail in anywise.

How swift the wind and soft and cool!
  What singing birds their love-lilts lift!
The clouds lean to the wayside pool
  And there they rest or, restful, drift.

And far and near the grasses toss
  To all the winds that wander wide:
And life denies all wintry loss;
  And graves and sorrows are defied.

And carols every gold-breast lark;
  And pipe the quails with mellow note;
And joy, all joy, from dawn to dark
  Laughs loud from every feathered throat.

While I as glad as waters wide,
  Make gleeful way through prairie grass
And am to all glad things allied
  That come and sing and never pass.

I Wonder Why

My laugh is tinctured with a tear;
  The sunset lurks along my sky:
A heartache mingles with my cheer;
  I, smiling, moan, I know not why.

Autumnal tints like dripping blood
  Spray all my landscape far and wide.
The summer, rushing as a flood,
  Blends in the moaning of the tide.

The dewy darkness lays its hand
  On all the daylight, sun-lit glad.
My heart, elate, along the sand
  In springtime walks and yet is sad.

I cannot quit me of this sphere
  Where death his sable treasure gains,
Habituated to the tear
  Which ever falls like autumn rains.

My laughter rings like trumpets loud,
  Glad draughts I take at wayside springs;
Though all the while my heart is bowed
  Like cagèd bird with flightless wings.

I Cannot Hear Thee Speak, O Crystal Heart!

I cannot hear thee speak, O Crystal Heart!
  The music of thy voice is grown diffused
  Like precious ointment very long time used
Till what was very much, is now a part
So small that for its merchandise no mart
  Is found. I listen, listen, sorely bruised
  As one, sea-waves have caught and flung, confused

On wreck-strewn sands. Thy voice is lost, Dear
Heart!
But I shall hear it yet. To-morrow comes.
This day is not the only day God hath
Writ calmly down in His sweet calendar.
Amidst confused crash of swords and drums
Thy words fade out. I wait. Life's aftermath
Hath silence where Love's voice chimes very far.

"They Have No Weary Nights in Paradise"

They have no weary nights in Paradise,
Where through long hours they lie awake in pain
Nor listen to the cadence of the rain,
Which falls upon the roof. No sweet surmise
Of respite on the spirit drips, nor guise
Of angel ministrant of balm. They wane—
Those grim and wakeful hours so slowly, fain
To crush the sufferer in anywise.
But then, in Paradise no baleful hours
Of nights or days in pain. No nights are there
With gloom apparelled, and with pain oppressed,
But only days of springtime lit with flowers
And vintages of mornings sweet and fair,
With health and heartsease gloriously blessed.

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